



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3

UGI Columbia Gas Plant Superfund Site

Columbia, Pennsylvania

April 2007

SITE UPDATE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is overseeing the cleanup at the UGI Columbia Gas Plant Site (Site). The Site is a two acre former gas plant property located in a light industrial and residential area of Columbia, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. EPA has approved a *removal* response action for the excavation and proper disposal of contaminated soils, the installation of concrete and asphalt caps, and four additional monitoring wells for the dissolved phase groundwater. The Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs), PPL Electric Utilities Corporation and UGI Utilities, Inc. (UGI), are performing the response action under Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) with EPA.

On March 20, 2007, an asbestos survey of the former buildings was conducted and one on-site monitoring well was abandoned. The installation of the four additional groundwater monitoring wells began on March 21, 2007. An asbestos abatement took place on April 3, 2007. The asbestos was removed and properly disposed of, and the on-site buildings were demolished the week of April 9, 2007. The next phase of work involves the installation of a storm water management system and an asphalt and concrete cap at the Site. The cap installation process will take approximately six weeks and start later this spring. Once installed, the cap will prevent dermal contact with the contaminated soils and prevent infiltration of precipitation through the soil, to control migration of the contaminants to the groundwater.

Later this year, EPA will offer the public a *remedial* Proposed Plan. At that time, EPA will present cleanup alternatives and solicit public comment on the EPA's preferred cleanup method for soil and groundwater contamination at the Site. A public meeting will also be held at that time. Following any comments, EPA will release a Record of Decision (ROD) that documents which cleanup alternative will be used. The Site has the potential for re-use after cleanup is completed.

Before:



After:



CONTAMINANT INFORMATION

The primary sources of contamination at the Site are coal tar and spent gas purifying materials. Hazardous substances associated with these materials include volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), heavy metals and cyanide.

There is coal tar in the sub-surface soil and bedrock at the Site. The subsurface soils are also contaminated with PAHs and metals. The groundwater, which flows through the contaminated subsurface soil and bedrock, has become contaminated with VOCs. The groundwater contains a dense non-aqueous phase liquid (DNAPL) contaminated with coal tar and PAHs. The dissolved phase groundwater is contaminated with benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene (BTEX), PAHs and cyanide, and is a source of contamination for the cooling water used to cool the pumps of the pre-treated municipal water supply.

People or animals that come in contact with contaminated materials may be at risk. For more information about the contaminants and associated risk factors, visit the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry web site: <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hazdat.html>.

SITE HISTORY

The Site includes a former manufactured gas plant (MGP) used by Columbia Gas from 1851 to 1932. In 1932, ownership of the MGP was transferred to Pennsylvania Power and Light (PP&L) and in 1949, ownership was transferred to Lancaster County Gas Company. Lancaster County Gas Company merged with UGI Corporation (UGI), which owned the MGP until 1979. A portion of the MGP property was used as a boat dealership from 1979 until 1994, when it was repurchased by PP&L. During the years of active gas manufacturing operations, overflows from a tar separator were directed to an open ditch that led to the Susquehanna River.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) conducted preliminary investigations at the Site in August 1984, and in 1985 PP&L and UGI conducted further investigations to determine the nature and extent of contamination at the Site. Tar was found in test pits dug in the gas and relief holders and in several soil borings on the Site. In addition, soil, sediment, sludge, tar and groundwater samples revealed VOC, PAH, heavy metal, and cyanide contamination. In 1987, it was determined that approximately 800 cubic yards of sediment in the Susquehanna River were contaminated with tar from the MGP.

In 1997, approximately 3,350 gallons of tar were removed from the two on-site holders and taken for off-site thermal treatment and disposal. In addition, approximately 700 tons of contaminated sediments were removed from the river and shipped for off-site thermal treatment and disposal. A sheet pile wall was installed along the river bank. The area was re-graded, covered with a geosynthetic cloth, rock, and stone. However, groundwater contamination remains and will be addressed in the upcoming Proposed Plan.



For More Information

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Site-related documents are available for review at the following locations:

Columbia Public Library
24 South 6th Street
Columbia, PA 17512
(717) 684-2255

U.S. EPA Region 3
Administrative Records Room
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Please call (215) 814-3157 to schedule an appointment.

Online Information:

www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/super/pa.htm
Listed under "UGI Columbia Gas Plant."

<http://www.epaosc.net/ugicolumbia>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Update on the UGI Columbia Gas Plant Superfund Site



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