



In conjunction with



# Fact Sheet

September 2007

## East 21st Street Works

### Results of the Interim Remedial Investigation

Public Meeting – October 3, 2007 at 7:00pm, JHS 104, 330 E. 21st St.

#### Dear Interested Citizen:

This fact sheet is to inform you of the results of the interim remedial investigation for the former East 21st Street Works.

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact:

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For site-related health questions, please contact:

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### Introduction

Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. (Con Edison), together with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), is providing this update on the investigation activities performed at the former East 21<sup>st</sup> Street Works (currently part of Peter Cooper Village), a historic manufactured gas plant (MGP). Activities at the site included a study of indoor air/soil gas, a site characterization study and interim remedial investigation study to investigate soil and groundwater.

### Project Status and Schedule

Initial investigative efforts at the site included collection of historic data and a soil gas/indoor air monitoring survey. Con Edison then conducted a Site Characterization Study in 2004 and an Interim Remedial Investigation study in 2006.

A Site Characterization Study (SCS) was conducted from January 2004 to April 2004 to investigate the site for the presence of contamination due to the prior operation of the MGP facility. The site characterization activities included: surface soil sampling, subsurface soil sampling, test pit excavation, and groundwater sampling. The investigation found that there are no impacts in the surface soil. The MGP impacts in subsurface soil were at least 2 feet below the ground surface, with the vast majority of the impacts being 10 feet and deeper. MGP impacts were also found in the groundwater at the site well beneath the surface.

Since MGP impacts were found during the SCS, an interim remedial investigation (RI) was conducted to delineate the extent of impacts. The interim RI was conducted from January 2006 through May 2006. The results of the RI confirmed the results of the SCS and in general determined the extent of impacts, which extended to the north side of E. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, the south side of E. 20<sup>th</sup> Street and along First Avenue. On the east side impacts were found in Stuyvesant Cove Park. A link to the Interim Remedial Investigation Report can be found at Con Edison's website at [www.coned.com/publicissues](http://www.coned.com/publicissues).

NYSDEC and NYSDOH have reviewed these findings and have recommended additional investigations. Additional investigations will be performed in the East River, north and south of Stuyvesant Cove Park along the East River and in the northeast area of Peter Cooper Village. Once this is complete, a final RI report will be submitted.

#### Documents related to this project are available at the following locations:

**Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer's Office**, 1 Centre Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007; 212-669-8300, Hours: M-F 9am-5pm; **Epiphany Branch, New York Public Library**, 228 E. 23 St., New York, NY 10010; 212-679-2645, Hours: Mon/Wed 12-8, Tues/Thur/Fri 10-6; Fri. 1-6, Sat. 10-5.

## Potential Exposure

A primary goal of these investigations was to evaluate the potential for exposure to these historical operations. Potential human exposure may come from breathing, ingesting or touching the contaminants. Because the soil contamination was found well beneath the surface, the public is not exposed through direct contact with the contaminants. Exposure to contaminated groundwater through ingestion is unlikely because New York City is served by a municipal water system. The NYSDOH has reviewed the data from the soil gas/indoor air monitoring survey that Con Edison conducted in all the building basements and concluded that there does not appear to be any impact to indoor air from MGP impacts in the soil or any significant or imminent threats to human health. Indoor air monitoring will continue as part of an overall Interim Site Management Plan until a remedy is proposed and implemented.

During the ongoing site investigation activities, extensive efforts were made to prevent exposure to potential hazards, including the use of real-time air monitoring in accordance with the NYSDOH's Community Air Monitoring Plan.

## Site Background

The former East 21st Street Works grounds encompassed approximately two-thirds of what is now Peter Cooper Village. The former site was bound to the north by the former East 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, south by East 20<sup>th</sup> Street, east by Avenue C and west by First Avenue.

Gas manufacturing and gas storage began at the E. 21<sup>st</sup> Street Works in the 1840's and continued until the mid 1940's. Con Edison sold the site to Stuyvesant Town Corporation and Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in 1944 and 1945, respectively, for development of the Peter Cooper Village housing project.

## What are former Manufactured Gas Plants?

Manufactured gas plants were operated between the 1800s and mid-1900s, before the development of natural gas distribution systems, to convert coal and oil into gas for heating, lighting and cooking. Byproducts of this early production process included contaminants such as tar and purifier wastes. Tar is a dark, viscous fluid with a distinctive acrid odor. Purifier wastes are materials that were formed during filtration of the gas before it was sent out to customers. The substances of concern related to these operations include BTEX compounds, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and metals. BTEX compounds are benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene. These are volatile hydrocarbons found in MGP byproducts and also found in most petroleum products such as gasoline. PAHs are also found in MGP byproducts as well as many petroleum products, such as asphalt.

## Public Involvement

Con Edison, NYSDEC and NYSDOH will be hosting a public meeting on Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00pm at JHS 104, located at 330 E. 21<sup>st</sup> Street, to present the Interim Remedial Investigation Report and answer questions.

Public understanding and involvement are an integral part of a successful investigation and remediation program. To provide you with the most up-to-date and accurate information regarding manufactured gas plants, Con Edison has created a series of informational resources including fact sheets, a toll-free hotline, and internet content at [www.coned.com/publicissues](http://www.coned.com/publicissues). A link to the Interim Remedial Investigation Report can be found on the Con Edison website. Information on the MGP program can also be found at the NYSDEC website at [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8430.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8430.html). In addition, a Citizen Participation Plan has been approved by NYS DEC that outlines the steps to be taken to provide for public participation in the remedial program for the site. Document repositories for site related documents have also been established so that concerned citizens can review available information. The document repositories are listed on the bottom of the first page.