



Chestertown Manufactured Gas Site, MD-0198

What You Need to Know

The 0.59-acre Chestertown Manufactured Gas (MGP) Site located along Radcliffe Creek in Chestertown, Kent County, operated from 1910 until 1946. MGP residuals have been identified on site and in the Radcliffe Creek wetlands. MDE is currently working with AmeriGas on the remedial investigation of the MGP contamination on and off site.

Site Location

The 0.59-acre Chestertown Manufactured Gas Plant (MGP) site is located at 813 West High Street in Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland. The former gas plant is situated on the western side of town, about one mile northwest of the Chester River. An inactive railroad spur, which is now an active “Rails-to Trails” pathway, is located immediately northeast of the site and is assumed to have been used in transporting materials to and from the site. Directly west of the site is Radcliffe Creek and farmland. The site is found on the Kent County tax map 0201 as parcel 0997. The coordinates for the site are approximately 39° 12.894' north and 76° 4.582' east.

Site History

The Chestertown Gas Company operated the plant from 1910 to 1928, at which point the company was sold to the National Public Utilities of Philadelphia. The company stopped manufacturing gas in 1946. The name was then changed to Chestertown Shore Gas Company and began propane gas distribution. On January 27, 1992, the property was transferred to SYN, Inc. On June 1, 1997, the property was transferred to Cornerstone Propane L.P.

The quantities of byproduct wastes generated at the Chestertown Gas Company plant during the 36 years of operation are not known or estimated. No precise information regarding storage and disposal practices of the coal tar and spent oxide wastes at this facility could be found by MDE. Generally, coal gasification generated a large quantity of coal tar wastes and was typically stored on site and sold for roofing, roadmaking or some other uses.

The property is currently unused and overrun with heavy vegetation. Nuisance dumping of old appliances, trash, car parts and other debris occurs on site. The only visible indication that a manufactured gas plant existed is a large steel gas holder that remains on the property.

Environmental Investigation

In September 1986, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) conducted a Preliminary Assessment that investigated the site history and coal-gas production practices. An interview

with a former manager at the facility revealed the potential existence of a tar pit located between the gas holder and the gas plant.

In December 1986, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designated the site as “No Further Remedial Action Planned” based on MDE’s Preliminary Assessment recommendation of low priority for further investigation.

In May 1999, MDE conducted a Site Survey that recommended further investigation and in May 2001, MDE conducted a Site Inspection that revealed gross coal tar manufacturing wastes on site and in the adjacent wetlands of Radcliffe Creek.

URS Corporation (URS), on behalf of Titan Propane, LLC (Titan), completed a Remedial Investigation (RI) of the site in December 2005, which confirmed the presence of elevated levels of coal tar related contamination on site and in the adjacent wetland soil. The RI recommended that remediation of onsite soils and hot spot wetland soils be evaluated in a Feasibility Study. On May 6, 2009, URS notified MDE that it was no longer retained by Titan.

Titan met with MDE on November 14, 2011 and agreed to work cooperatively to fully characterize the coal tar contamination on and off site. On July 2, 2012, AmeriGas Propane L.P. (“AmeriGas”), a successor to Titan, recommitted to working with MDE to provide a work plan for further coal tar contamination delineation. MDE received the work plan on November 16, 2012.

On January 23, 2017, MDE approved the *Supplemental Site Characterization Report* by AmeriGas’ environmental consultant, GEI. That report recommended further investigation of former coal tar impacts to the southeast and to Radcliffe Creek and its adjacent wetlands. MDE approved the *Supplemental Site Characterization Work Plan* and the *Site Plan/Sample Location Plan* on May 18, 2018.

On January 8, 2019, AmeriGas stopped working on the project until EPA and MDE conducted a search for other potential responsible parties (PRPs). The results of this search identified no PRPs, and MDE notified AmeriGas on July 1, 2021, that it wanted them to implement the Work Plans approved on May 18, 2018.

Current Status

MDE is waiting for AmeriGas to move forward with the Work Plans approved on May 18, 2018.