



Chestertown Manufactured Gas Site

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 O201 as parcel O997. 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, road-making 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 Investigations

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.



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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.

In December 2005, the URS Corporation completed a Remedial Investigation (RI) for Titan Propane, LCC. The RI confirmed 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 Propane.

Since work had stalled, on November 14, 2011, Titan met with MDE and agreed to work cooperatively to fully characterize the coal tar contamination on and off site. Then, on July 2, 2012, AmeriGas Propane L.P. ("AmeriGas"), a successor to Titan Propane, agreed to work cooperatively 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.

Current Status

MDE is waiting for AmeriGas to submit a new work plan for further delineating the gross coal tar impacts in the wetland area identified at the WB-2 boring location adjacent to the site.