

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

SKOKIE SITE ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATION

Southwest Corner of Oakton Street at McCormick Boulevard
Skokie, Illinois
November 2007

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1. Overview of the Community Relations Plan

This Community Relations Plan describes the strategy for informing the public about an environmental investigation of the Skokie Site, a former manufactured gas plant (MGP) site at the southwest corner of the intersection of Oakton Street and McCormick Boulevard in Skokie, Illinois. The environmental investigation is being undertaken by Nicor Gas and Commonwealth Edison (the Utilities). The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is the owner of the property.

This community relations program is designed to provide the community (including government officials, businesses and residents in the surrounding area and other interested individuals and organizations) with the following:

- 1) A general understanding of the Skokie site and associated site history.
- 2) An overview of the upcoming environmental investigation, including a description of site preparation activities, the scope of investigation activities and measures taken to minimize exposure to those in the vicinity of onsite activities.
- 3) Specific actions the Utilities will pursue to establish, maintain and develop clear lines of communication with the community, in addition to soliciting and addressing concerns that may arise.
- 4) Helpful references and contacts to address requests for additional information.

The Community Relations Plan was developed, in part, based on meetings with various interested community parties, including the Village of Skokie, Skokie Park District, and MWRD.

2. Site Description

In the first half of the 20th Century, the energy needs of the Village of Skokie and the surrounding communities were partially supplied by manufactured gas produced at the Skokie site. Construction and operation of the Skokie MGP facility began in approximately 1910. The Skokie facility property was an irregular parcel of land, of approximately 35 acres.

The western portion of the original Skokie facility did not contain significant manufactured gas process structures or activities. The western portion is currently occupied by the Skokie Park District's Sports Park. It has received an environmental release letter from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) confirming successful completion of remedial action.

The eastern portion of the original Skokie facility (the Skokie site), which is the focus of upcoming investigation activities, contained coal gas manufacturing structures and operations. Some of the structures present on the Skokie site included gas holders and various process buildings.

Gas production at the site occurred from 1910 through the 1940s. The facility may have been maintained in a standby condition during the 1950s. By 1963, the gas holder and some of the other MGP structures had been dismantled. The site has remained undeveloped since that time. Ownership of the original Skokie facility was transferred in portions to the MWRD in September 1965, June 1966 and December 1992.

Currently, the site is undeveloped and is covered with grass, trees and shrubs. The site also contains unpaved roads, railroad spur tracks, and the remnants of some of the former manufactured gas plant buildings. The site is enclosed by existing fencing.

North Boundary: Oakton Street

Further north of Oakton are light industrial and commercial properties.

South Boundary: Commonwealth Edison electrical substation

Further south of the substation are the Chicago Rapid Transit Yellow Line/Skokie Swift tracks and the MWRD North Side Sewage Treatment Plant.

East Boundary: McCormick Boulevard

Further east of McCormick Boulevard lies the North Shore Channel.

West Boundary: Skokie Park District Sports Park (property owned by the MWRD).

3. Environmental Investigations

Prior investigations were conducted at the site in August 1995 and in December 1998 to determine the nature and extent of possible impacted soil associated with the former MGP activities. The investigation found byproducts associated with prior facility operations. These results indicated a need for further investigation.

A comprehensive site investigation is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2007. The site investigation will evaluate the extent of impact to the soil and groundwater, by conducting soil borings/probes and test pits and collecting soil and groundwater samples. The site investigation tasks are outlined below:

- Identify the locations of below-ground structures to define the subsurface conditions of the soil both inside and outside structures.
- Define and evaluate source areas.

- Evaluate areas of known historic activities.
- Define the subsurface geology around the site.
- Evaluate groundwater conditions at the site.
- Evaluate all exposure pathways following Illinois EPA guidelines.
- Conduct perimeter air monitoring during site investigation activities.

In 2006, a human health risk assessment of the potential risk associated with the proposed environmental site investigation was conducted. The risk assessment found that the site investigation activities are not expected to pose a health risk to people living, working or otherwise conducting activities outside the site. The MWRD accepted the risk assessment's findings, and the Village of Skokie and the Skokie Park District were provided with the results of the risk assessment.

4. Community Background

Community Profile

The Village of Skokie, Illinois had a population of 63,348 in the 2000 censuses. It is a near-north Chicago suburb. Skokie's elected village officials include a mayor and six trustees, all elected at-large. The village also has one of eight state-certified municipal health departments in Illinois.

Village water is supplied by the adjacent City of Evanston and drawn from Lake Michigan. Nicor Gas supplies gas service to Skokie and Commonwealth Edison supplies electricity.

The weekly *Skokie Review* newspaper covers village government and community affairs.

A search of state and federal EPA databases indicates that the Skokie community has limited experience with environmental investigations similar to the one at the site. Most of those identified in the databases are dealt with through the Illinois EPA's Site Remediation Program, designed to encourage voluntary restoration of contaminated properties. Those individuals interviewed for this plan could recall no major environmental projects.

Community Concerns

It is the Utilities' experience that community concerns that may be identified can be addressed through an ongoing public communications effort before and during the investigation. As described in more detail below, information will be provided through various communication channels.

5. The Community Relations Program

The community relations program for this site will involve regular communication with government officials, people in the vicinity and other interested individuals and organizations. The Utilities will monitor possible concerns and provide responses as needed.

The community relations program will:

- Identify through meetings and interviews the officials, community leaders, nearby property owners, users and occupants and other area residents and organizations that may have an interest in the investigation project. Media organizations that cover Skokie activities will also be identified.
- Create a dedicated website about the site investigation that is updated periodically throughout the field work. The address is www.skokiesite.com.
- Place copies of the site investigation work plan and printed communications distributed to the public in the information repository in the Skokie Public Library, 5215 West Oakton Street, telephone 847.673.7774.
- Maintain a public notice list to distribute fact sheets and status reports to the community. The list in Attachment A includes property owners and occupants in the vicinity, government officials, including officials of the nearby City of Evanston, state legislators and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency staff. Other interested individuals and organizations are included as well, and the list may be updated as interest in the project continues.
- Issue a fact sheet and cover letter that explains the upcoming investigation, describes how citizens may ask questions and offer comments, and directs interested citizens to the dedicated website and information repository at the Skokie Public Library.
- Host a public information meeting before any on-site work begins, announcing the meeting through a direct mailing to the site public notice list, direct mailing to approximately 1,400 Skokie residences and businesses, posters at the adjacent Skokie Sports Park, the community newspaper and notification on this website.
- Provide opportunities for interested persons to obtain additional information and share comments or concerns. The dedicated website at www.skokiesite.com will be updated on a periodic basis throughout the project. In addition, a message can be left by phone at 888-833-8918 or by email at comments@skokiesite.com. Both will be checked frequently throughout the project.

Attachment A
PUBLIC NOTICE LIST
November 2007

1. State Elected Officials

Sen. Jeffrey Schoenberg
9th Legislative District
Illinois State Senate
820 Davis ST, Ste 102
Evanston, IL 60201

Rep. Elizabeth Coulson
17th District
Illinois House of Representatives
3801 West Lake Avenue
Glenview, IL 60026

2. State Agencies

Greg Dunn
Division of Land Remediation
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
P. O. Box 19276
Springfield, IL 62794-9276

Kurt Neibergall
Office of Community Relations
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
P. O. Box 19276
Springfield, IL 62794-9276

Tom Hornshaw
Office of Chemical Safety
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
P.O. Box 19276
Springfield, IL 62794-9276

Maggie Carson
Office of the Director MC 1 (media rel.)
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
P.O. Box 19276
Springfield, IL 62794-9276

Ken Runkle
Division of Environmental Health
Illinois Department of Public Health
525 W. Jefferson Street
Springfield, IL 62761

Tom Baughman
West Chicago Regional Office
Illinois Department of Public Health
245 W. Roosevelt Road West
Chicago, IL 60185

3. Local Officials and Agencies

George Van Dusen Mayor
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

Michele Bromberg Trustee
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

Michael Gelder Trustee
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

Frank McCabe Trustee
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

Donald Perille
Trustee
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

Randall Roberts
Trustee
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

Edie Sue Sutker
Trustee
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

Marlene Williams
Village Clerk
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

Albert J. Rigoni
Village Manager
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

Lowell Huckleberry
Director of Health
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

Ralph Czerwinski
Chief
Village of Skokie Fire Department
7424 Niles Center Road
Skokie, IL 60077

Barry Silverberg Chief
Village of Skokie Police Department
8350 Laramie Avenue
Skokie, IL 60077

Carolyn Anthony Director
Skokie Public Library 5215 West Oakton
Street
Skokie, IL 60676

Ann Tennes
Director of Marketing & Communications
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

J. Patrick Hanley
Corporation Counsel
Village of Skokie
5127 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60077

Max Slankard
Director
Skokie Public Works Department
9050 Gross Point Road
Skokie, IL 60077

Susan Aberman
President
Skokie Park District
9300 Weber Park PL
Skokie, IL 60077

Michael Alter
Vice President
Skokie Park District
9300 Weber Park PL
Skokie, IL 60077

Jerry Clarito
Commissioner
Skokie Park District
9300 Weber Park PL
Skokie, IL 60077

Mike Reid
Commissioner
Skokie Park District
9300 Weber Park PL
Skokie, IL 60077

Maureen Yanes
Commissioner
Skokie Park District
9300 Weber Park PL
Skokie, IL 60077

Mark Schneiderman
Executive Director
Skokie Park District
9300 Weber Park PL
Skokie, IL 60077

Lorraine Morton
Mayor
City of Evanston
2100 Ridge AV
Evanston, IL 60201

Lionel Jean-Baptiste
Alderman, 2nd Ward
City of Evanston
2100 Ridge AV
Evanston, IL 60201

Ann Rainey
Alderman, 8th Ward
City of Evanston
2100 Ridge AV
Evanston, IL 60201

Aniana Hansen
Alderman, 9th Ward
City of Evanston
2100 Ridge AV
Evanston, IL 60201

Julia Carroll
City Manager
City of Evanston
2100 Ridge AV
Evanston, IL 60201

John Ohrlund
Superintendent of Parks and Facilities
Skokie Park District
9300 Weber Park Place
Skokie, IL 60077

Douglas Gaynor
Parks/Forestry & Recreation
City of Evanston
2100 Ridge AV
Evanston, IL 60201

Cook County Department of Environmental
Control
69 W. Washington ST, Rm 1900
Chicago, IL 60602

Civic Organizations

Howard Meyer
Executive Director
Skokie Chamber of Commerce
P. O. Box 106
Skokie, IL 60077

Media

News Department Skokie Review
130 S. Prospect AV Park Ridge, IL 60068

Private Citizens

Family Community Resource Center
Illinois Department of Human Services
8020 St. Louis AV
Skokie, IL 60076

Rauland Borg
3450 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60076

General Automation Inc.
3300 Oakton ST
Skokie, IL 60076

Approximately 1,400 residences and
businesses in the area bounded by:
McCormick Boulevard to the east;
Howard Street to the south;
Main and Madison Streets to the north; and
East Prairie Road and Crawford Avenue to
the west, in Skokie.