

Community Fact Sheet

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Washington Gas Site- Operable Unit 1 CERCLA – Activity – Site Restoration

Fall 2015

OPERABLE UNIT 1 CLEANUP CONTINUES

In the summer of 2015, Washington Gas Light Company (Washington Gas) completed the contaminated surface and subsurface soil removal and backfilling requirements of the Operable Unit (OU) 1 Remedial Design and Remedial Action at the government property (outlined in **red** on Figure 1). OU1 is generally located south of Water Street SE and east of 11th Street SE in Washington, D.C. Wastes were related to the former Washington Gas East Station manufactured gas plant property (shown in **brown** on the figure). The National Park Service (NPS) as lead agency, in partnership with the District of Columbia (District), oversees all of Washington Gas's investigation and cleanup activities as part of a 2012 legal agreement under CERCLA¹. In 2006, most of the government property was transferred by the United States from NPS to the District, but a small portion is still managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Figure 1. Washington Gas OU1 Site Map

In accordance with the CERCLA Record of Decision, Statement of Work, and Remedial Design/Remedial Action (RD/RA) Work Plans; Washington Gas has performed the following OU1 Remedial Actions:

- Excavate up to 3 feet of contaminated surface and subsurface soil.
- Backfill all excavated areas with clean fill and topsoil.

To finish the cleanup, Washington Gas is working to perform the following actions.

- Establish healthy vegetative cover over the clean soil at the government property.
- Implement an Institutional Controls Program to ensure that people working or playing on the government property are not exposed to risks from hazardous substances and that future uses of the property do not make the remedy less protective.

¹ CERCLA is the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, also known as Superfund. The CERCLA Consent Decree was signed in September 2012.

OU1 REMEDIAL ACTION

The OU1 remedial action removed coal gas manufacturing contamination that was in surface and subsurface soil within the government property. Contaminated soil was removed to prevent health risks to future site visitors, and the government property will be transformed into recreational space owned and operated by the District.

EXCAVATED SOIL

Washington Gas manufactured flammable gas, initially for lighting and then for heating, on their property from 1888 to the mid-1980s. Contamination that resulted at the government property from the waste used or created during gas manufacturing including coal tar, purifier box waste, wood chips, cinders, clinkers, ash, and building materials. Washington Gas removed soil within 3 feet of the ground surface containing polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds (especially benzene), cyanide, and heavy metals in the government property soils. Contaminated soil was stockpiled in a controlled location on-site, then loaded into trucks for proper disposal at a lined landfill. Air monitoring stations, truck inspections, and erosion and sediment controls were maintained to protect public health and safety and to prevent releases of contaminated soil to the Anacostia River and surrounding neighborhoods.



CLEAN FILL AND TOPSOIL

Clean fill and topsoil used to backfill all excavated soil was analyzed to meet stringent clean fill standards established by NPS. If contamination was found at the 3 foot excavation depth limit, a thick orange fabric was placed over the contamination to warn future site workers to stop digging. Clean fill was placed over the warning layer or the exposed soil, and compacted. A 6-inch thick layer of topsoil was placed over the clean fill and planted with temporary seed for erosion control. The ground surface was contoured to gradually slope toward the Anacostia River.

SITE RESTORATION

In October 2015, Washington Gas seeded the topsoil with native species appropriate for planting in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and adjacent coastal regions. Washington Gas will have two years to establish a healthy vegetative cover over the government property. Public access to the government property will be limited by a fence for two years to ensure successful vegetation over the clean soil that will blanket the property. The section of Anacostia Riverwalk trail that crosses through the Site will not be accessible while vegetation becomes established, but a detour is already in place for trail users.



NPS OVERSIGHT AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

NPS will ensure that Washington Gas meets all deadlines and requirements established in the Consent Decree, Statement of Work, and OU1 Remedial Design and Remedial Action documents. NPS also will continue to update Site fact sheets as progress is achieved on this important project. Please check the Washington Gas – East Station Site webpage for updated information at www.nps.gov/nace/parkmgmt/apecp.htm.