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February 12, 2015

Dear Rochelle Residents and Officials:

On February 23 Nicor Gas will resume activities on an environmental project at the Nicor Gas property located in the 200 block of 2nd Avenue in Rochelle. A former manufactured gas plant (MGP) operated at this location between 1906 and 1947. The project is being conducted in cooperation with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) through its voluntary Site Remediation Program.

A fact sheet is attached to this letter to provide you with a brief summary of the site's history, the historical significance of former MGP plants and an overview of the upcoming work.

If you would like more information about this project, please feel free to contact me at 331.223.7597 or by email at David.Pietryla@aglresources.com.

For questions about the Illinois EPA's oversight of this project, you may contact Carol Fuller at the Illinois EPA at 217.524.8807 (carol.fuller@Illinois.gov).

Sincerely,

David Pietryla
Manager Community Relations and Economic Development

Enclosure

Rochelle Manufactured Gas Plant Environmental Project Update

February 2015



Aerial photo of the property located on the 200 block of 2nd Avenue in Rochelle

Nicor Gas will soon conduct additional activities for an environmental project in your neighborhood.

Between 1906 and 1947, a plant manufactured gas from coal on a property now owned by Nicor Gas and located in the 200 block of 2nd Avenue. Nicor Gas previously removed by-products contained within underground structures that remain at the property. This new phase will further investigate gas manufacturing impacts outside of the underground structures. The work is being conducted in cooperation with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) through its voluntary Site Remediation Program.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT

Nicor Gas has contracted with Geosyntec Consultants, an environmental engineering firm, to conduct the additional investigation in order to plan for final cleanup of the property. The work will take approximately one month to complete and will involve drilling to collect soil and groundwater samples. You may see workers wearing protective clothing to keep themselves clean.

During activities, you may notice odors similar to mothballs or paving materials if residues are uncovered at the site. Although odors may become noticeable, they are not considered a health risk. An air monitoring program will be used to confirm that there are no adverse impacts to air quality in the area.

The samples taken at the site will be sent to an independent laboratory for analysis. A report of the investigation will be prepared and sent to the Illinois EPA for review and approval. Once it is finalized, the report will be placed in the information repository for public review.

An information repository containing a collection of documents about the project has been set up at the Flagg-Rochelle Public Library, 619 4th Avenue in Rochelle.

MANUFACTURED GAS PLANT BACKGROUND

Before interstate pipelines made natural gas available in this area, gas was manufactured using a variety of raw materials, most commonly, coal and oil. Manufactured gas or "Town Gas" provided energy for cooking, lighting, heating and industrial processes. At one time, up to 3,000 plants operated in the United States. Manufactured gas ceased to be a major energy source in Illinois by the 1940s.

Residuals from the gas manufacturing process such as ashes, cinders and tar were sometimes left on-site after the plants closed. These can contain polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and volatile organic chemicals (VOCs) such as benzene and toluene. PAHs are commonly found as a result of combustion and VOCs readily vaporize into the air and are often found in fuels and solvents. Potential environmental effects of tar and other residues were not a concern when these plants closed. However, today steps are being taken to investigate and cleanup these former sites to protect the environment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Nicor Gas is committed to keeping the community informed about this project.

If you have questions at any time during this project, please contact David Pietryla, Nicor Gas Community Relations & Economic Development Manager, at **331.223.7597** or via email at **David.Pietryla@aglresources.com**.

If you would like information about the Illinois EPA's role in the project, you may contact Carol Fuller at **217.524.8807** or by email at **carol.fuller@illinois.gov**.

For more information on PAHs and VOCs, you can refer to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry web site: **atsdr.cdc.gov/toxFAQs/index.asp**.