

Fact Sheet #3
January 2002

FORMER ALISO STREET MANUFACTURED GAS PLANT SITE



DTSC is one of six Boards and Departments within the California Environmental Protection Agency. The Department's mission is to restore, protect and enhance the environment, to ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality, by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.

State of California



California
Environmental
Protection Agency



INTRODUCTION

An ongoing environmental investigation is being conducted at the Former Aliso Street Manufactured Gas Plant (MGP) near downtown Los Angeles. The investigations are being performed by environmental consultants, working for Southern California Gas Company (The Gas Company), under Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) direct oversight. These types of investigation are being routinely conducted throughout California at former MGP sites. Since these gas plants typically used and generated hazardous chemicals, the investigations determine the nature and extent of any contaminated areas.

The Gas Company has entered into a Voluntary Cleanup Agreement (VCA) with DTSC to conduct a Remedial Investigation (RI) and if necessary cleanup activities at the plant site. The RI consists of collecting soil, soil vapor and groundwater samples and analyzing them to assess the nature and extent of contamination. Once the investigation is complete, DTSC will determine if an additional cleanup is necessary.

SITE HISTORY

The Aliso Street MGP operated from 1876 through 1927 and was placed on standby until 1941. From 1943 to 1947, the U.S. Defense Plant Corporation used the site to produce butadiene, a raw material used in the manufacture of rubber. The Aliso Street MGP is one of 150 former gas plants throughout California. The plant closed in 1947 and was mostly demolished by 1954, in part to make way for the construction of Highway 101. During freeway construction, some of the structures and large amounts of soil were removed. To date, most of the properties that formerly comprised the Aliso Street gas plant have been redeveloped for industrial or government use. The large gas holders on Sectors C and D were removed in 1973. (See site map of five Sectors)

SITE DESCRIPTION

Investigation activities are being conducted on a 54-acre area with a current focus on Sector B, Sector C, Sector D, and Sector E. The area surrounding the Site has been primarily industrial for over 50 years. Current land uses include commercial and industrial facilities, a government building, a restaurant, vacant lots, bus maintenance facility and public freeways. Each sector is described as follows.

COMMUNITY SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

DTSC invites you to complete and return the enclosed questionnaire. The information will assist us in assessing the level of interest and determine future outreach activities. If possible, please return the survey by January 23, 2002 to the address shown.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our website at www.dtsc.ca.gov.

Sector A: approximately 3 acres. Encompasses the area north of the Hollywood Freeway, between Vignes Street off-ramp to the west, Keller Street to the east, and Ramirez Street to the north. The northwest portion of Sector A is occupied by a Denny's restaurant and a parking lot.

! Major Chemicals of Concern: benzene, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs)

! Investigation update: Implemented a Removal Action surrounding Denny's restaurant in 1999. Further investigation for the remaining property is ongoing.

Sector B: approximately 14 acres. The site is bordered by Cesar Chavez Avenue to the northeast, Keller Street to the southeast, Ramirez Street to the southwest, and Lyon Street to the northwest. Sector B is presently used by various departments within the City of Los Angeles (mainly as workshops, offices, and storage rooms). The southwest portion of Sector B is occupied by the C. Erwin Piper Center.

! Major Chemicals of Concern: benzene, PAHs

! Investigation update: Preliminary Endangerment Assessment (PEA) completed. Further work on the site to be performed as part of the Remedial Investigation.

Sector C: approximately 16.4 acres. Roughly bounded by the Hollywood Freeway to the north, Vignes Street to the west, Temple Street to the south, and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Rail Tracks and the Los Angeles River channel to the east. This site is divided into blocks to facilitate the investigation. Uses include; cold storage facility, a fish processing facility, oil storage facility and a vacant lot. To facilitate the investigation this site is divided into blocks (See Site Map on page 3)

! Major Chemicals of Concern: Benzene, PAHs, and Dicyclopentadiene (DCPD)

! Investigation update: PEA completed for Sector C. Ongoing investigation at Blocks G, K, L, N, O, Q, R.

Sector D: approximately 11 acres. Divided into three areas:

% Area 1 – bordered on the south by Cesar Chavez Avenue and on the east by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Rail Tracks and Los Angeles River channel,

% Area 2 – bordered on the south by Cesar Chavez Avenue and on the west by Lyon Street, and

%Area 3 – bordered on the south by Area 2 and on the west by Lyon Street.

Currently, Sector D is fully developed and actively used by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) for offices, storage spaces, and bus maintenance and repairs.

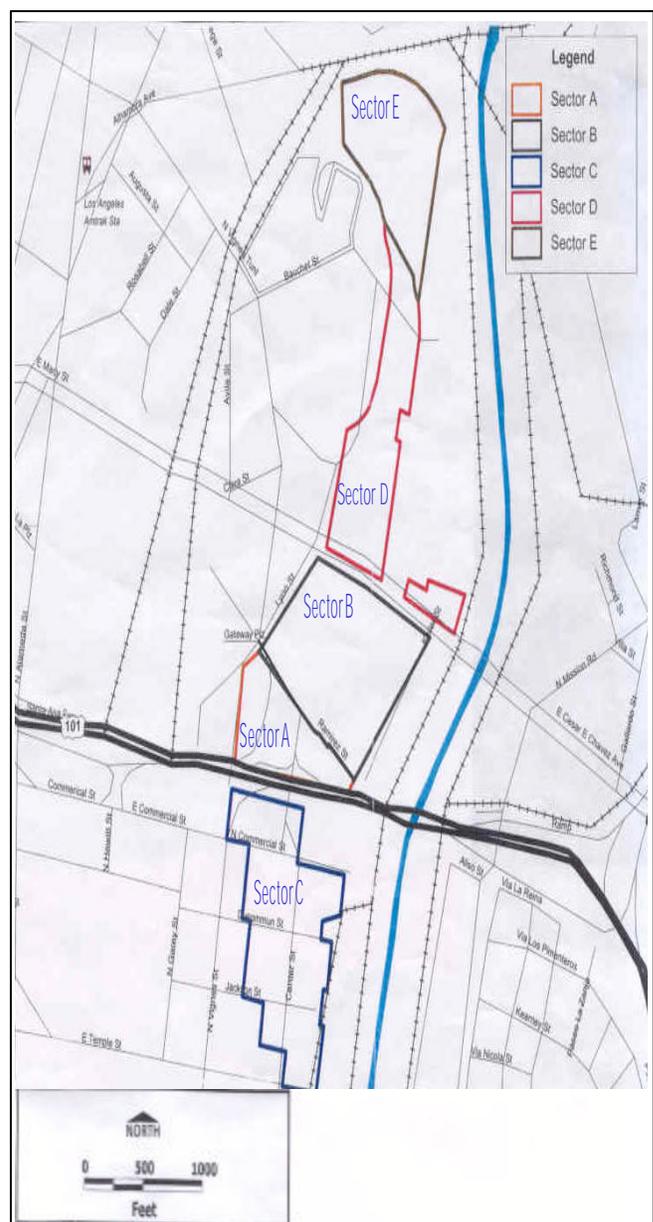
! Major Chemicals of Concern: PAHs

! Investigation update: Ongoing soil gas sampling, soil and groundwater sampling.

Sector E: approximately 10 acres. Located in an industrial area at the end of Bauchet Street in Los Angeles. Bordered to the east by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Rail Tracks and the Los Angeles River channel. Currently occupied by a vacant warehouse, a paved parking lot, two parking structures, and part of the Central jail.

! Major Chemicals of Concern: butadiene, perchloroethylene, DCPD and PAHs

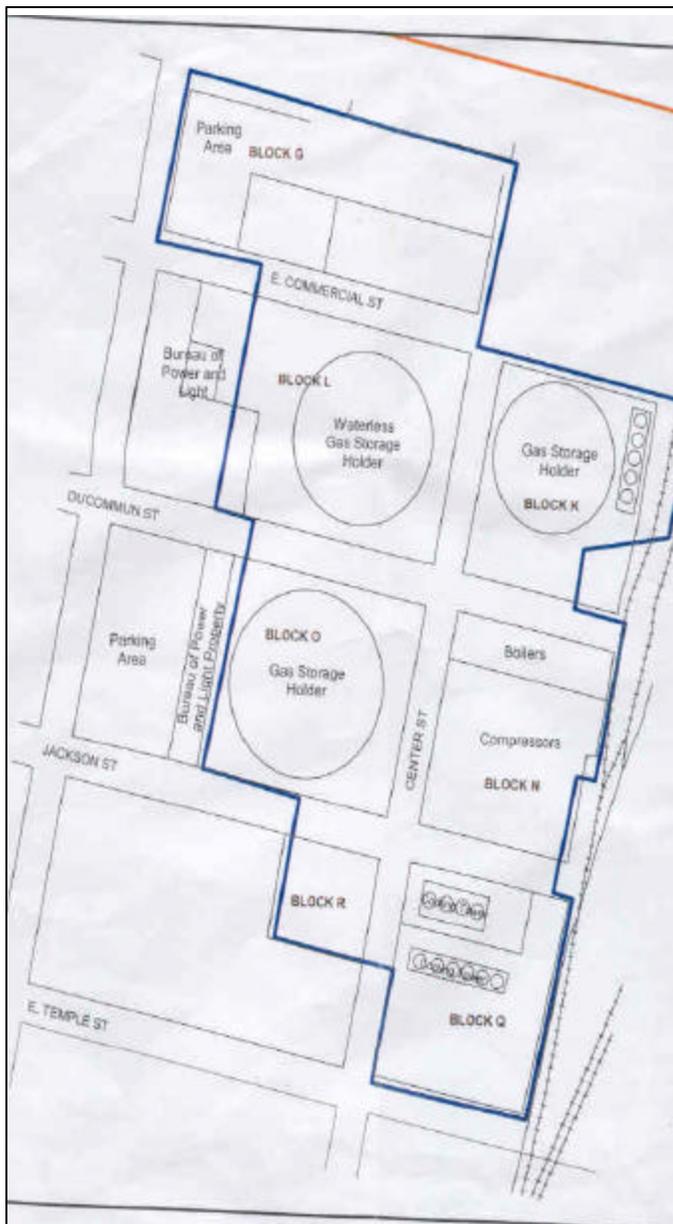
! Investigation update: PEA completed. RI ongoing. An interim soil vapor extraction system is planned using a carbon filtering system. The system extracts vapors from the soil and strips them of contaminants.



Site Map of Five Sectors

PAST ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS

The environmental investigations overseen by the DTSC start with a Preliminary Endangerment Assessment (PEA) to see if there is any contamination. PEAs have been completed for all sectors. A screening health risk was completed for each sector to determine the potential risk of chemicals found on site. The results showed that polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) were the primary chemicals of concern. PAHs are a group of chemicals that are found in crude oil and are also a by product of the gas manufacturing process. Benzene, a petroleum derivative widely used in the chemical industry, was another chemical of concern. Both PAHs and benzene can cause health problems when a person is exposed to the chemical at high enough levels.



Site Map of Sector C, Six Blocks

PUBLIC SAFETY DURING PROJECT ACTIVITIES

In order to continue protecting the community and workers during remedial activities, field work is conducted according to a Health and Safety Plan prepared for the site. This includes controls to minimize odor, dust, airborne contaminants and noise. In addition, most activities occur within fenced areas where access is restricted. Any areas open to the public will be closed off during work periods as a precautionary measure to further ensure public safety.

UPCOMING DOCUMENTS FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

An interim Removal Action workplan for Sector E is available at the Lincoln Heights Library (see below). The community will be kept informed through fact sheets and other means (as identified by the community), of the investigation results and will be invited to review and comment on any cleanup actions that may be proposed.

HOW TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All documents pertaining to this project are available for your review at the following locations:

Lincoln Heights Public Library
2530 Workman Street
Regional Public Records Office
Los Angeles, CA 90031
(213) 226-1692
Open Monday through Saturday

Department of Toxic Substances Control
1011 N. Grandview Ave.
Glendale, CA 91201
Contact Jone Barrio at (818) 551-2886, for an appointment.

Please contact the following DTSC representatives if you have any questions:

Stephen Cutts
DTSC Project Manager
(818) 551-2178

Leticia Hernandez
DTSC Public Participation Specialist
(714) 484-5488

Si desea información en español, comuníquese con:

Leticia Hernandez
(714) 484-5488

For media inquiries, please contact:

Jeanne Garcia at (818) 551-2176

We are very interested in hearing from you and will keep you informed by answering your questions, holding public meetings and providing fact sheets such as this one.

Your comments are important and will help us determine how best to keep you informed of the progress of the investigation and involved in decisions regarding possible cleanup actions. We encourage you to complete and return the enclosed survey by January 23, 2002.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Benzene - A petroleum derivative widely used in the chemical industry. A few uses are: synthesis of rubber, nylon, polystyrene, and pesticides, and production of gasoline. It is a highly volatile chemical readily absorbed by breathing, ingestion, or contact with the skin. It is listed as a cancer-causing chemical under Proposition 65.

Polynuclear Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) - Natural constituents of crude oil, and also may be formed when organic materials such as coal, oil, fuel, wood, or even foods are not completely burned. PAHs are found in lampblack, a by-product of historic gas manufacturing processes. They are also found in a wide variety of other materials such as diesel exhaust, roofing tars, asphalt, cigarettes, petroleum products, some foods, and even some shampoos.

Preliminary Endangerment Assessment (PEA) - A study is conducted to determine if current or past chemical use practices have resulted in the release or threatened release of hazardous substances that may pose a threat to public health and/or the environment. The PEA is submitted to DTSC to determine if further action is necessary.

Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FSS) - A series of investigations and studies to identify the types and extent of chemicals of concern at the site, determine the cleanup criteria, and provide an evaluation of the alternatives for cleaning up any identified soil or groundwater problems.

1, 3-Butadiene - This chemical is a colorless gas with a mild gasoline-like odor. It is often used in the manufacturing of synthetic rubber. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has determined through animal studies that this chemical may reasonably be anticipated to be a carcinogen.

Dicyclopentadiene (DCPD) - A man-made substance produced by heating crude oil products. It is colorless with a camphor-like odor. As the chemical enters the air, it breaks down quickly into less toxic chemicals. It is not known if DCPD causes cancer.

Perchloroethylene (PCE) - A volatile organic compound used primarily as a dry-cleaning agent. It is often referred to as "perc." It is toxic and listed as a cancer-causing chemical under Proposition 65.



Ms. Leticia Hernandez
Public Participation Specialist
Department of Toxic Substances Control
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, California 90630

INSIDE: INFORMATION ON THE FORMER ALSIO STREET MANUFACTURED GAS PLANT SITE