

An Overview of the John Fitch Way Project:

Former Warren Street Coal Gas Site Remediation and Restoration



Project Background

Prior to the widespread availability of natural gas, gas was “manufactured” through a process of heating coal in a specialized oven. These facilities were called Manufactured Gas Plants (MGP) and were common in many urban areas of the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Manufactured gas was used for residential heating, street lighting and cooking similar to the way natural gas is used today. The manufactured gas process produced by-products such as coal tar and other chemicals that were used in the chemical, dye and pharmaceutical industries. An unintended consequence of the MGP industry was the release of coal tar and various by-products to the environment.

A predecessor company of Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSE&G) operated an MGP in Trenton from the late 1840s to late 1890s on four parcels, east of Route 29. MGP operations ended in the late 1890s. The site subsequently served as a gas district operations headquarters facility until the 1920s, when it was acquired through a series of transactions by the City of Trenton. Between 1960 and 1965, buildings were removed, and the site was then redeveloped.

This three-acre site, near the corner of South Warren and Market Streets (Block 10701, Lots 1, 2 and 3), is located on State of New Jersey property. It is currently composed of a portion of a large parking lot and adjacent to a helicopter pad near the Department of Labor and Division of Taxation buildings, and across the street from the Hughes Justice Complex.

Work Completed to Date

PSE&G has conducted extensive remedial investigations of the site in accordance with the regulations and oversight provided by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). The investigation results were provided to the NJDEP for their review and approval in the late 2000s.

March 2010: A Remedial Action Work Plan (RAWP) describing the excavation remediation method was submitted to the NJDEP and subsequently approved by the site’s Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP).

Summer 2023: In preparation for soil remediation in 2024, soil sampling was performed to further refine the extent of the excavation areas and for waste classification purposes. It is a standard part of pre-design planning for the remediation of impacted soils.



Project Site

April 2024: The LSRP approved RAWP Addendum describing the updated/refined excavation plans was filed with the NJDEP.

August 2024-October 2025: Approximately 100,000 tons of MGP-impacted soil was excavated and replaced with clean soil.

- Underground infrastructure related to the former MGP operations also was removed.
- The majority of the work was performed within a temporary sprung structure (i.e., tented enclosure).
- Excavated soil was transported to licensed off-site soil treatment facilities.
- Groundwater encountered during soil remediation activities was treated and conveyed off site in accordance with NJDEP and local permits.
- The project site was restored to its original condition and current codes.
- Re-striping of the parking lot was completed by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT).

Outstanding Items as November 2025

Tree Replacement: The Completion of landscaping within the parking lot islands (tree planting) is anticipated in late November or early December.

Rebuild Pedestrian Walkway: Final restoration/replace-ment of the temporary asphalt walkway and lighting adjacent to and east of the helipad will be scheduled when the contractor receives the necessary permits to conduct the work. The temporary asphalt will be replaced with concrete and temporary lights will be replaced with permanent fixtures. Until then, the temporary asphalt walkway and lighting will remain in place and that walkway open to pedestrians.

Ongoing Groundwater Remediation

Activity related to the ongoing remediation of groundwater will continue beyond the current soil remediation project. These activities will include the installation of groundwater monitoring wells on and off the state's property, as well as regular sampling.

All activities are being completed in accordance with the NJDEP Technical Requirements for Site Remediation and under the oversight of the Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP) of record.

About the MGP Constituents – The source of the MGP materials is the former MGP operations. The remediation is driven by the presence of MGP coal tar and oil by-products in the soil and groundwater that include benzene, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (or PAHs) and metals. Potential concerns from MGP contaminants are associated with ingestion (eating) of the affected soil or drinking the affected groundwater. The City of Trenton water supply is not impacted, and the buildings, streets and sidewalks served as an effective barrier to ingestion.

For More Information

Contact the PSE&G Former MGP Remediation Project Information Line at **(855) 356-2383**.

The LSRP is Michael Newton.

NJDEP Site Remediation Program Interest (PI) number for the site is G000005462. This project is identified as Activity #: LSRI120001.

For Additional Information Requests

If you require information beyond what is summarized in this document, you may submit a formal request through the Open Public Records Act (OPRA) process.

To learn more about submitting an OPRA request and to access the necessary forms and guidelines, please visit:

<https://www.nj.gov/opra/>

This site provides comprehensive information about the OPRA process, including how to file a request, response timeframes, and your rights as a requestor under New Jersey's public records law.