

Community Fact Sheet

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



National Capital Region
National Capital Parks – East

March 2012

Washington Gas Site CERCLA Activities

SITE LOCATION AND HISTORY

The Washington Gas East Station Property (Site) is located in Southeast Washington, D.C., generally south of M Street and east of 11th Street (outlined in **brown** on the figure and referred to as the Washington Gas property in the text of this fact sheet). Washington Gas Light Company (Washington Gas) manufactured gas on this property from 1888 to the mid-1980s. The National Park Service (NPS) and the District of Columbia are overseeing investigation and cleanup actions at the Site, which is defined to include all areas where hazardous substances released from the Washington Gas facility are located, including contaminated sediments in the adjacent Anacostia River. These actions are being conducted pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA also known as “Superfund”).

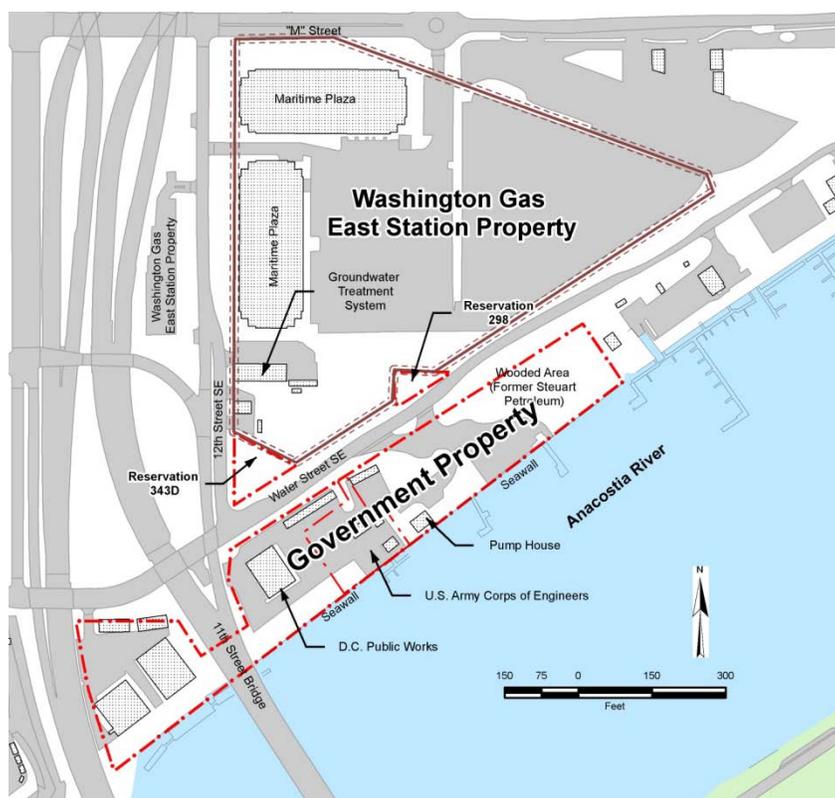


Figure 1: Map of Washington Gas Site

The primary focus of the current clean-up activity is the area southeast of Water Street, beneath and east of the 11th Street Bridge (the area outlined in **red** on the figure), as well as impacted portions of the Anacostia River. This area was formerly part of Anacostia Park, an urban waterfront park along the Anacostia River managed by NPS. In 2008, most of the property was transferred by the United States to the District of Columbia (a small portion is still managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers). This area is referred to as the government property in this fact sheet. Despite the transfer, NPS continues in its role as lead agency under CERCLA and is responsible for ensuring cleanup of the Site.

Wastes generated from the many years of gas production on the Washington Gas property include metals, oil, tar, coal, and other related materials. These wastes were placed on the government property as fill material or migrated via groundwater under the property.

ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS

Environmental investigations have confirmed that contamination extends from the Washington Gas property through the government property to the Anacostia River. These investigations have shown that the Site, including the government property, is contaminated with industrial waste containing polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds (especially benzene), cyanide, and heavy metals. The NPS has issued a Record of Decision (ROD) that selects a remedy addressing contaminated surface and subsurface soil on the government property to protect human health and the environment. In addition, the ROD recognized the need to evaluate the extent to which Site contamination might be adversely impacting the Anacostia River.

PROPOSED AGREEMENT

In December 2011, the NPS, in partnership with the District of Columbia and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, reached a proposed agreement through which Washington Gas will clean up the government property and investigate and evaluate clean-up alternatives associated with Site contamination affecting the Anacostia River. This proposed agreement was lodged with the United States District Court for the District of Columbia (Court), dated December 13, 2011, and was subject to a 60-day public comment period. The proposed agreement is currently pending before the Court and is subject to the Court's review and approval.

The proposed agreement divides the Site into two separate areas for clean-up purposes: Operable Unit 1 (OU1) for soil and subsurface soil within the government property; and Operable Unit 2 (OU2) for groundwater and the Anacostia River's surface water and sediments.

OU1 Soils:

To address surface and subsurface soils within the government property, Washington Gas will:

- (1) Excavate up to three feet of contaminated surface and subsurface soil in all areas of the government property where hazardous substances are located;
- (2) Backfill all excavated areas with clean fill and topsoil; and
- (3) Implement an Institutional Controls Program to ensure that people working or recreating on the government property are not exposed to risks from hazardous substances and that future uses of the property do not adversely impact the effectiveness of the remedy. These restrictions include limiting or prohibiting excavations through the clean fill.

OU2 Groundwater and the Anacostia River:

Washington Gas will also complete a thorough investigation of the groundwater underlying the government property and adjacent contaminated water and sediments in the Anacostia River. The purpose of this investigation is to determine whether hazardous substances in the groundwater are continuing to contaminate the Anacostia River. To make this determination, the investigation will require installation of additional groundwater wells, collection of sediment samples, a study of benthic organisms living in the riverbed, and an assessment of whether contaminants in the river pose a risk to human or ecological receptors. The investigation will also identify and evaluate clean-up alternatives for groundwater and river sediments. At the conclusion of the investigation, the NPS will determine what remedy is necessary. The NPS will identify the remedy in a Proposed Plan and seek public review and comment on the Proposed Plan. After evaluating all the public comments received, the NPS intends to select a remedy and move forward expeditiously to ensure that it is implemented.

NPS OVERSIGHT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The NPS, in partnership with the District of Columbia, will oversee all Washington Gas investigation and cleanup activities. The NPS will ensure that Washington Gas meets all deadlines established in the proposed agreement and will assess penalties against Washington Gas for any violations. In addition, the NPS will post completed Site reports and other documents online to facilitate public review and involvement. The 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.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you have questions concerning the information contained in this fact sheet, please contact Emily Ferguson, the NPS project manager for the Site, at (202) 692-6033.