



KEYSPAN TO CONDUCT SAMPLING IN AND ALONG GOWANUS CANAL; PROJECT APPROVED BY NYSDEC TO EVALUATE ALL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

KeySpan is about to begin sediment sampling and other field work along and within the Gowanus Canal in association with the on-going investigation of the Citizens (Public Place) former MGP site. The site's Remedial Investigation indicated the potential for MGP constituents to reach the Canal and be found in sediments. A review of land use in the Canal vicinity shows that other uses in the area could also have impacted sediment in the Canal, including creosoting works, fertilizer manufacturing, coal yards, asphalt plants and major oil storage facilities as well as two other former MGP sites operated by KeySpan predecessors. In addition, the Canal receives sanitary sewage and stormwater discharges from City of New York sewers. These industrial land uses and discharges have likely contributed volatile organic compounds and semivolatile organic compounds chemically similar if not identical to those usually associated with former MGP operations, as well as heavy metals, pesticides, herbicides and other chemicals. A Site Investigation of the Gowanus Bay and Gowanus Canal done by the United States Army Corps of Engineers in October 2003 identified the presence of these types of compounds and metals.

While this project is associated with the environmental investigation of one of KeySpan's former Manufactured Gas Plant sites, it has a broader purpose of developing information to better understand what contaminants are in the Canal, which areas of the Canal are affected by them and what the sources for their presence may be. Only with this information can the state and federal agencies responsible for the environmental conditions of public waterways make decisions on how best to improve conditions in the Canal and then protect it from further contamination.

As requested and approved by the NYSDEC, the project's significant objectives include an evaluation of whether discharges can be observed entering the Canal at or near the former MGP sites, evaluating sediment quality adjacent to the sites and throughout the canal, evaluating the nature of contaminants in surface water and sediments in the Canal and its basins, comparing sediment chemistry up and downstream from the sites as well as adjacent to them, evaluating the origin of chemical constituents in sediments utilizing forensic techniques and estimating the relative and approximate chronological age of sediments to determine when specific contaminants may have been deposited.

Owners of private and municipal properties along the Canal are requested to provide access to their properties for taking samples from any conduits into the Canal as well as taking soil samples and soil borings. These samples will provide the material necessary for analysis to achieve the project's objectives.

Sampling in the Canal will be done from a specially equipped boat and is not expected to cause any disruptions in the community. The boat is equipped with appropriate technology in the event sampling releases sheens or other discharges to the surface water. KeySpan will work with the private property owners to minimize disruptions to their activities, and will pay the costs of sampling on private properties.

If you have questions or comments about the Gowanus Canal sampling project please call the KeySpan Hotline at 718.403.2084.