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From: David Powers  
Communications Director  
708.358.5781

Contact: Gerry Castro  
Department of Public Health  
708.358.5490

***Seven new properties qualify for remediation***

**Results In from Second Round of Barrie Park Neighborhood Residential Sampling**

Seven of 17 yards sampled for contaminants left over from a turn of the century manufactured gas plant have qualified to have their properties cleaned up, according to results just in from the second round of residential sampling in the Barrie Park neighborhood on the Village's southeast side.

These latest test results come from samples gathered in May and June. The first round of sampling, conducted last fall, was for property adjacent to the park, designated as Area 1. The second round of sampling included 14 properties in Area 2, those yards that abut property in Area 1 where contaminants exceeding clean-up standards were found or which did not participate in the voluntary program. Three additional Area 1 properties also were sampled during this second round.

Of the seven properties where contaminants were found during the latest round of sampling, five were in Area 2 and two were in Area 1. To date 45 properties have been sampled, with levels of contaminants exceeding clean-up standards found in 19 yards.

Tom Hahne of Tetrattech EM, Inc., the Village's environmental consultants, said the results from the latest round of sampling were similar to the first round, noting that samples exceeding the remediation objectives did not appear to indicate widespread contamination or the presence of any source material such as that found in the park.

"Contaminants in Area 2 were detected at levels within the range of background, but were detected above the established remediation objectives in the yards sampled during this round," he said, explaining that many of the same compounds, byproducts of fossil fuel combustion, exist at varying background levels in all urban communities.

Sampling in Area 2 was limited to that portion of the yard that was adjacent to an Area 1 property where contaminants were found or which did not participate in the voluntary program. In most cases, samples were gathered only from backyards. The next round of sampling, scheduled to begin during the last week of August, will move to the front yards of those Area 2 properties where samples exceeded clean-up standards. In addition, Area 1 and 2 property owners who did not participate in the first two rounds also can still take part in the program.

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If samples from the front yards of the property tested in Area 2 that exceeded the remediation objectives show actionable levels of contamination, contiguous property will become eligible for testing and, if necessary, clean up as well.

Samples gathered last fall from 28 yards in Area 1 found 12 properties with contaminants that exceeded levels – or the remediation objectives – established by the Village and utility companies as benchmarks above which the property would qualify for clean up. Following this latest round of sampling, three properties in Area 1 and 13 properties in Area 2 remain eligible for testing.

The sampling procedure requires samples be gathered at specific depths ranging from three to 12 feet, with probes going the deepest in Area 1 properties that are contiguous to the park. In the testing to date, only one sample, taken from the front yard of an Area 1 property during the latest sampling phase, showed evidence of contamination at the deeper level. Samples from the back yard of the same property and samples from adjacent yards during Round 1 did not identify any evidence of contamination in deeper samples, suggesting that the contamination is localized, according to Hahne. However, he said further investigation is planned to determine if the finding is an isolated occurrence.

Meanwhile, actual work on Barrie Park and the surrounding streets and parkways is now underway. The four-square-block construction site is surrounded by a 10-foot-high, fabric covered fence and work crews have begun assembling the equipment necessary to safely remove and replace an estimated 370,000 tons of soil, primarily by rail. The project is expected to take about 18 months, with the dedication of a new Barrie Park tentatively set for August 2003.

Barrie Park is one of hundreds of former manufactured gas plants, or MPGs, scattered across the northeast and Midwest. The plants processed coal into gas for heating, lighting and cooking. Operations at the Oak Park facility ceased in 1928, but byproducts of the process remain buried within the park. Commonwealth Edison Co. and Nicor Gas Inc., successors of the original gas manufacturing company, are responsible for the cleanup.

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# ROUND 1 AND 2 SAMPLING RESULTS

