

# NPL Site Narrative for Peoples Natural Gas Co.

## PEOPLES NATURAL GAS CO.

### Dubuque, Iowa

**Conditions at proposal (June 24, 1988):** The Peoples Natural Gas Co. Site covers approximately 15 acres in downtown Dubuque, Dubuque County, Iowa. Key City Gas Co. produced a gaseous fuel at the site from 1937 to 1954. In 1953 and 1954, North Central Public Service Co. acquired all outstanding stock and assets of Key City Gas, including the site. In November 1957, Northern Natural Gas Co., through its Peoples Natural Gas Co., purchased the site from North Central. In October 1964, Peoples conveyed the eastern four-fifths of the site to the City of Dubuque, which uses it as a garage. In January 1985, Peoples conveyed the remainder of the site to the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT).

The main wastes associated with coal gasification are polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which are found in coal tar, a by-product of the gasification process, and cyanide salts, which are found in iron oxide waste produced during purification of the manufactured gas. Coal tar waste was deposited in underground tanks, and the iron-cyanide waste was buried on-site.

In November 1983, IDOT, which had targeted the site for highway construction, found a layer of tar in soil samples collected at the site. The samples contained cyanide, phenols, and two PAHs -- naphthalene and acenaphthalene. The State and EPA have detected the same contaminants in on-site wells. An estimated 60,000 people obtain drinking water from municipal wells within 3 miles of the site.

The Mississippi River is approximately 500 feet east of the site. Surface water downstream is used for industrial and recreational activities. A wildlife refuge is 2 miles downstream, and wetlands are within 0.5 mile.

**Status (August 30, 1990):** Under an April 1989 CERCLA Administrative Order on Consent with EPA, Midwest Gas (a successor company of North Central), IDOT, and the City of Dubuque are conducting a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) to determine the type and extent of contamination at the site and identify alternatives for remedial action. The RI/FS covers ground water contamination, as well as soil contamination outside the construction corridor of U.S. Highway 61, which consists (roughly) of the western third of the site. The order also calls for Midwest Gas to remove coal tar and contaminated soil in the construction corridor and transport the materials to an off-site incinerator. The removal will permit highway construction to proceed.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.