

Gas Networks Ireland / Limerick Gasworks Remediation Project

EPA Licence Register Number W0281-01

Status Update No 2, 25 August 2020

Recent progress of remediation activities

Since the EPA's last web update, dated 31 July 2020, the following works have been completed by Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) at the Limerick Gasworks site:

- Excavations of contaminated soils from underground structures were completed, and stockpiles of graded materials were created for either removal from site or processing and redistribution according to grade.
- Approximately 3,500 tonnes of contaminated material were transferred off site by truck for recovery abroad on the 18th of August. This transfer was expected to take two days, but in the event GNI completed the work in one day. This transfer was pre-notified by the EPA by Public Notice published on 17th of August.
- Processing and redistribution of the stockpiles of excavated material within certain tank structures and across the site. This work is currently in progress.

The EPA has maintained regular communication with the licensee during these works. EPA inspectors and senior management were in the vicinity of the site on 18th August while the transfer of material to a ship berthed at Limerick Docks was ongoing. We conducted monitoring throughout that day of a range of volatile substances likely to be present in any emissions generated by the transfer works and carried out an odour assessment in the area.

Remaining remediation tasks

Following the removal of material for disposal abroad, the remaining remediation works to be completed involve:

- processing of the remaining stockpiles and redistribution of the processed material over the site, and within the open tanks, to create a clean and level surface,
- intake of clean stone cover material for the site, and
- drilling groundwater boreholes to provide for monitoring the groundwater during the aftercare period.

GNI have indicated that this work will be completed before the end of August. At that stage, the site will be fully remediated, and will enter the aftercare period.

Complaints

Since the last update on 31st July, the EPA has received 22 complaints from members of the public about odours and noise from onsite activities, effects of odour suppression chemicals in the perimeter spray and about operations being carried out on the site outside of the agreed hours of operation (08:00 – 19:00 Monday to Friday and 08:30 – 13:00 Saturday).

13 of these complaints were specifically associated with the transfer operations on 18th August. An EPA odour assessment carried out on that day confirmed non-compliant odours downwind of the site during the transfer operation.

EPA enforcement actions to date

Arising from these complaints, the EPA has issued notices of non-compliance for

- detection of offsite odour,
- operation outside of agreed operating hours, and
- failure to prevent nuisance caused by the onsite odour suppression system.

In response to the non-compliances, the EPA has instructed the licensee on two occasions to cease activities that were causing offsite odour impacts. We will continue to do so as and when we establish that this is necessary to minimise offsite impact.

The licensee has also been instructed to confine site works to the agreed operational periods and to reduce the emission of odour suppressants.

In addition, our investigation is ongoing into complaints about noise and we await further data on this issue.

Continuous monitoring of air quality in the vicinity will continue until the works have been concluded. The latest report of this monitoring is expected to be finalised this week and will be published to this page.

EPA continue to liaise with the Department of Public Health, HSE Mid-West to ensure that any patterns of health effects that might be related to the odour and other emissions for the licensed site are identified and addressed.

The EPA will continue to have a presence in the area to ensure that offsite impacts are minimised, and we will continue to take firm enforcement action in line with our Enforcement Policy, available at <http://epa.ie/enforcement/policy/>, to ensure that Gas Networks Ireland achieves and maintains full compliance with their licence.

Making Environmental Complaints

The Environmental Complaints section of the EPA website can be used to make complaints of an environmental nature using this Form:

[Online Complaint Form](#)

All complaints reported this way are captured by our internal enforcement system and are immediately viewable by enforcement inspectors. By using this method, you are guaranteed that your complaint will be received and acted upon quickly by the relevant enforcement team.