

SYDNEY TAR PONDS AGENCY--Coke Ovens Site Cleanup Begins

The cleanup at the former industrial Coke Ovens site will soon begin with building underground cut-off walls to limit clean groundwater from reaching the contaminated property.

The Sydney Tar Ponds Agency announced a tender to build walls that will also prevent contamination from flowing beyond site boundaries. The walls will be built along the north and south sides of the 68-hectare property.

The north wall will be made from betonite/soil slurry, which is a soft clay and water mixture. The south wall will be made from clay.

"If continuous monitoring shows that more walls are needed to prevent clean groundwater from mixing with contaminated groundwater on the Coke Ovens site, we will construct more walls," said Frank Potter, president of the Sydney Tar Ponds Agency. "Government partners are committed to effective clean-up solutions that serve to protect human health and the environment."

Construction is expected to begin in July and finish in November.

The cut-off walls will work with other design elements to be built on the Coke Ovens site, including a groundwater collection system that will feed into an on-site water treatment facility. The facility will treat the water before it is released.

Several projects have already been completed. All above-ground buildings and structures were demolished and Coke Ovens Brook was redirected into new channels that move the water away from contaminated sections. Underground debris remains, but will be properly managed during the work.

The project has an air-monitoring program. Soil samples will also be taken and surface water will be monitored. The agency will soon request the services of an independent quality assurance consultant to monitor construction quality. As well, an independent environmental consultant will be hired to oversee the cleanup, including the effectiveness of the cut-off walls.

The government of Canada and the province of Nova Scotia signed a memorandum of agreement on May 12, 2004, committing the two parties to jointly participate in the remediation of the Sydney Tar Ponds and Coke Ovens sites. It is a \$400-million agreement that specifies that the cleanup be complete by 2014.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

Underground cut-off walls to prevent clean groundwater from reaching the contaminated property will soon be built on the Coke Ovens site.

The Sydney Tar Ponds Agency announced a tender for the

construction of vertical walls that will also prevent onsite groundwater from migrating beyond property boundaries.

The walls will be built along the north and south sides of the property, which spans 68 hectares. The north wall will be made from betonite/soil slurry, which is a soft clay and water material. The south wall will be made from clay.

The work is expected to begin next month and be finished in November.

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