
St. Paul Syndicate Well #2 – Fact Sheet and FAQ's

AltaGas Utilities Inc. (AUI) is a natural gas distribution utility serving over 78,000 customers across the Province of Alberta, including in the Town of St. Paul. AUI's or its predecessors have been providing safe, reliable natural gas service in Alberta since 1954. AUI is bound by Alberta regulations through the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) and the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER - formerly the ERCB) and is proud of its record of compliance.

The AER instructed AUI to locate an abandoned well, identified as St. Paul Well #2, on 49th Avenue, St. Paul, AB. In compliance with AER instructions, and in accordance with Directive 079: Surface Development in Proximity to Abandoned Wells, AUI undertook measures to locate the abandoned well, drilled in 1947 on rural property at LSD 15 of 4-58-9-W4.

After a rigorous search using successive aerial photos, AUI located the abandoned well between the street and the sidewalk, and exposed the capped casing stub. A soap test was performed on the welded plate and revealed evidence of a small methane leak.

In July 2016, AUI performed a well re-abandonment, which was, unfortunately, unsuccessful. AUI installed a conduit around the surface casing and enclosed the installation with a vented utility valve box. The current well pressure and flow is being monitored by AUI technicians. There is no threat to public safety from this leak. In accordance with AER conditions, AUI intends to re-abandon the well during the month of August, 2017. AUI has complied with the AER in all respects, and will continue to do so as re-abandonment is completed.

Well History:

Information available on the subject well is limited, however AUI has determined the following:

- An exploration well was drilled on rural farmland in November 1947.
- The well was perforated in June, 1948.
- The well was perforated again in October, 1948, then capped while the rig was onsite.
- The well was permanently abandoned in 1955 using cement and a welded plate.
- The well was never tied in to any pipeline.
- In 1971 the land was subdivided and developed. Caveats by St. Paul Utilities, Plains-Western Gas and Electric Company, and the Town of St. Paul were in place on the rural property prior to the sale to a developer, but are not indicated after the transfer.
 - Prior to 1996 there were no guidelines in place for municipalities or developers to determine the location of abandoned wells. Further, it was common practice for caveats and easements of abandoned facilities to be removed from titles. Guide 079, issued in 2012, places certain conditions on development in the area of abandoned wells.
 - See <http://aer.ca/rules-and-regulations/directives/directive-079> for further details on Directive 79.

Project Contact Details:

- Hotline: 780-980-6190 (8 – 4:30, M-F)
- On-Site Technician: 780-210-0399 (Upon Commencement of Work, 8 – 4:30, M-F)
- Website: <http://www.StPaulWell.com>
- Email: stpaulwell@agutl.com
- 24 Hour Natural Gas Emergencies: 1-866-222-2068

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

- See following pages

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions

General

Why are you doing this?

A very small leak was found on a well abandoned in 1955. This work is necessary to re-abandon the well and repair the leak. This work is being performed in accordance with the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) Directive 79.

How long will it take?

Work is scheduled to start on July 29th, 2016 and last about 14 days.

Who is paying for this?

AltaGas Utilities (AUI) is paying for the work.

Will natural gas rates go up because of this?

AUI's rates are approved by the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) and are set according to a pre-established formula for a five-year period. This project has no more, and no less, of an impact than any operations or maintenance work.

Will the work affect my taxes?

Local tax rates are established by the municipality.

Will this affect my home or vehicle insurance?

This work is not associated with private insurance claims.

Will work affect property values?

The largest determination for property values is the local real estate market.

Will work affect garbage and recycling pick-ups?

No.

Will work interfere with utility services such as electricity, internet, and television?

No.

Will work interfere with telephone or Wi-Fi signals?

No.

Is AltaGas Utilities using local and/or union workers?

AltaGas Utilities workers live in the St. Paul community and non-management workers are unionized.

What happens if there are issues with the well in the future? Will you have to do this again?

The intent of this work is to permanently abandon the well.

Nighttime Lights

Are nighttime lights required / needed?

Lights will be used at night for safety and security purposes.

How bright would any lights be? Where will they be pointed?

Lighting will be directed downwards towards the work area and efforts will be made to avoid glare into residences and windows.

Are flashing or strobing lights to be used?

FAA regulations require a flashing light at the top of the rig equipment. No other flashing lights are anticipated to be required.

Will there be any noise or hum from a generator associated with nighttime light use?

We do not anticipate using generators for night-time lighting.

Fencing

What areas will be fenced off?

Please see www.stpaulwell.com for the location of fencing.

How high will fencing be?

Fencing will meet all minimum height safety requirements.

Is it safe for my children to play near the fencing?

All areas outside the fencing are safe for normal use.

What will you do to prevent strong winds from blowing fencing and hitting homes/cars/people?

All fencing will be properly secured.

Sidewalks

Can we still use public sidewalks?

All home entrances and virtually all home and public sidewalk areas will be accessible during the well re-abandonment activities.

Can my kids ride their bikes?

All areas outside the fencing are safe for normal use.

Will there be damage to the sidewalks? Who will repair sidewalk damage?

No damage to sidewalks is anticipated. The scope of work includes the replacement of sod in the area of the well; any areas impacted by the work will be restored to as good or better condition than before the work

Street Access

Will I be able to use any part of 49th Avenue?

The areas of 49th Avenue between 44th Street and 43rd Street will be closed for public use.

What if I don't get my car out in time?

AltaGas Utilities will work to accommodate special circumstances and requests. An access lane will remain clear on the south side of 49th Avenue for emergency vehicle access.

AltaGas Utilities will communicate with customers to coordinate the removal of vehicles from 49th Avenue prior to the start of work.

I will be away on holidays. Do I need to remove my car before my vacation?

Vehicles need to be removed from 49th Avenue by the end of day, July 28th.

What if I change my mind and decide I do need my car that is in the garage?

AltaGas Utilities will work to accommodate special circumstances and requests. An access lane will remain clear on the south side of 49th Avenue for emergency vehicle access.

What if I need to move during the re-abandonment activities?

AltaGas Utilities will work to accommodate special circumstances and requests. This may include arranging movers to access a home via the alleyway.

EMS/Fire Response

If there is an emergency, will EMS or Fire Services be able to reach my house?

An access lane will remain clear on the south side of 49th Avenue for emergency vehicle access, including local fire department needs.

Will this cause delays for EMS or Fire Services?

An access lane will remain clear on the south side of 49th Avenue for emergency vehicle access. You can notify AltaGas Utilities of anticipated emergency vehicle arrivals by calling the onsite AltaGas Utilities Technician at 780-210-0399.

Will fire services have access to fire hydrants?

Fire hydrants will remain accessible during the well re-abandonment activities.

Will emergency services have access to front and back doors?

Yes. All home entrances and virtually all home and public sidewalk areas will be accessible during the well re-abandonment activities.

Will there be any interruption / interference with notification aids and cell phones?

No.

Noise

When will work start/stop? Will work continue during nighttime hours?

The work is not anticipated to exceed 12 hours/day, during daylight hours (8 a.m. – 8 p.m.).

What will cause noise at the worksite? Will there be a steady stream or sudden burst of sirens/horns?

The use of a service rig at the worksite will cause motor noise during work hours. Reasonable efforts will be made to manage the amount of noise associated with service rig equipment.

How much noise will there be? Will I need ear protection?

Reasonable efforts will be made to manage the amount of noise associated with service rig equipment. Customers will not require hearing protection outside of the fenced areas.

Will noise affect my ability to sleep at night?

The work is not anticipated to exceed 12 hours/day, during daylight hours.

Will AltaGas Utilities use alarms / warning sounds to notify residents of an emergency of gas release?

While the probability of a natural gas leak is very low, AltaGas Utilities will use air monitoring equipment in the work area. An audible alarm will sound if natural gas is detected in the work area.

I work night shift. Will noise affect my daytime sleeping?

We will work with you to find reasonable solutions to any sleep disruption.

What happens if there is an emergency situation?

In the unlikely event of an emergency, an audible alarm will sound, and you should move immediately to the stop signs at either end of 49th Avenue (43rd Street or 44th Street). Further instructions will be provided at that time.

Vibrations

Will I feel anything in my home during work activities?

No. Motors will be operating on 49th Avenue, which are not expected to cause any vibration.

Should I secure items on my shelves?

This will not be necessary.

Will vibrations affect fine motor skills such as writing, drawing, or medical procedures?

No.

Health

I have asthma or other breathing conditions. Will work cause dust or other breathing concerns?

Breathing concerns are not anticipated in association with the scope of work.

I have dermatitis/eczema. Will work cause dust or other skin irritants?

Skin irritation concerns are not anticipated in association with the scope of work.

Will there be any smells / fumes associated with the work?

The only odor expected is normal motor exhaust. Odors and fume health concerns are not anticipated in association with the scope of work.

Will the work cause any pacemaker and other medical device interruptions?

No.

I am on oxygen therapy. Will the work cause an explosive atmosphere?

The proposed work will not affect the standard safety precautions associated with oxygen therapy use.

Safety

What safety precautions is AltaGas Utilities taking to ensure safety of the public?

AltaGas Utilities will employ a security company to provide 24 hour security services on the site. Additionally, for the safety of the public, appropriate security fencing will surround the site.

Will large vehicles or an increase in vehicle traffic be present?

Vehicles and equipment will be inside the security fence. No abnormal traffic is anticipated.

Can my kids still play in our yard?

Yes. Areas outside the fenced work areas are considered safe for normal use.

Can kids play in nearby school grounds or Kinsmen Park

Yes. Areas outside the fenced work areas are considered safe for normal use.

Will this interrupt any plans / uses for Kinsmen Park?

No. The work will not interfere with activities in surrounding areas outside of the fenced areas.

Are there any explosion hazards associated with the current natural gas well leak?

The levels of natural gas from the well leak are not sufficient to cause a fire or explosion hazard.

Could this work make the leak worse?

The goal of the well re-abandonment is to prevent any future leaks of the well. Based on the historical data and the current natural gas readings from the well, the probability of drilling activities making the leak worse is extremely low.

Are there any tipping and other mechanical hazards associated with the service rig?

The service rig will be secured and all safety regulations followed to prevent tipping and other mechanical hazards.

Are there specific days that I should avoid the area?

Customers should avoid entering the fenced work areas. Areas outside of the fenced work remain accessible for normal use.

What will AltaGas Utilities do to monitor the air for natural gas?

While the probability of a natural gas leak during well re-abandonment activities is very low, AltaGas Utilities will use air monitoring equipment in the work area. An audible alarm will sound if natural gas is detected in the work area.

What will AltaGas Utilities do to monitor the well after work is complete?

AltaGas Utilities will monitor the well as part of our regular below grade leak inspections.

Does AltaGas Utilities have a Health, Safety and Environment Program?

Yes. See <http://www.altagasutilities.com/commitment-to-safety> and <http://www.altagasutilities.com/environmental-code-of-conduct>

Does AltaGas Utilities have an Emergency Response Plan?

Yes. AltaGas Utilities has developed an Emergency Response Plan to identify possible risks, no matter how remote. Mitigation plans have been developed to reduce or eliminate these risks.

I am a smoker, can I smoke in and around my own home?

Yes. You may smoke in your home, however smoking will be prohibited in proximity to the well operations and equipment. Signage will be posted around the work area.

How do you plan on notifying residents of an emergency situation? Do you have the use of an automated call out system?

Evacuation will be performed by door to door notification and any residents not at home will be notified via emergency contact telephone numbers provided to AUI prior to the work being performed.

Parking

Where will workers be parking?

Workers and crew will park in designated areas either within the fenced work zone or at a nearby designated parking lot.

Will I be able to park my vehicle at home?

While some affected customers have access to rear alleyways and driveways, none will have parking access on 49th Avenue between 43rd and 44th Streets during the work.

Are there designated areas to park if I cannot access my driveway?

Customers will be consulted for alternative parking and access arrangements, and off-site parking will be provided.

I have a camper and/or boat that I usually store in my driveway. Am I expected to remove this also?

Large recreational vehicle or boats that will be utilized during the scheduled work days should be removed from 49th Avenue prior to the start of work. Vehicles that will not be utilized may remain in driveways.

How will I get groceries and other parcels to my home?

For those unable to park in back lane driveways, AUI will assist customers with transportation of groceries or other parcels from their vehicles to their home.

We like to go camping in the summer. Will AltaGas Utilities assist with moving camping gear to my vehicle?

AltaGas Utilities technicians will assist customers with transportation to and from their vehicles.

How do I contact AltaGas Utilities if I need assistance?

Between 8am and 6pm, residents can contact the onsite AltaGas Utilities Technician at 780-210-0399.

I work late. Can I be escorted from my vehicle to my home at night?

AltaGas Utilities will employ a security company to provide 24 hour security services on the site and nearby designated parking area. Security service will be available to escort customers after working hours.

Contact

Is there someone at AltaGas Utilities I can talk to? Is this a real person or an automated message?

AltaGas Utilities has a dedicated hotline to answer your questions. Please contact 780-980-6190 to speak with a live person M-F 8am-4:30pm

Is there a number available for after-hours emergencies?

AltaGas Utilities' 24 hour emergency phone number is 1-866-222-2068

Is there someone at the Alberta Energy Regulator I can contact?

The Alberta Energy Regulator Customer Contact Center phone number is 1-855-297-8311

Do you have a website with more information?

More information is available at www.stpaulwell.com

Is more information available on Social Media?

AltaGas Utilities has a Facebook and Twitter Account, however the best source for updated information or changes is www.stpaulwell.com

Is there a number I can call to reach someone on-site during the well re-abandonment?

The onsite AltaGas Utilities Technician can be reached at 780-210-0399.

Business Specific Concerns

Will work affect customer access to businesses on 50th Avenue?

No.

Will noise levels be a nuisance to people working or customers visiting businesses on 50th Avenue?

No. Noise levels associated with service rig use should not affect regular daily routines and businesses on 50th Avenue.

Will work cause radio signal interruptions?

No.

Other

Is this fracking?

No.

Could this work cause earthquakes or sinkholes?

This work is within an existing well and formation, and is not known to cause earthquakes or sinkholes.

Do I need to worry about water quality?

The work associated with well re-abandonment will not affect the water quality in St. Paul.

What if there are delays and work needs to go past the scheduled time?

In the unlikely event that work is delayed, AltaGas Utilities will notify affected customers of the change in schedule.

Can rain or other weather cause delays?

Standard weather and rain is not anticipated to cause delays in the scheduled work.