

May 2024

Ongoing Operation and Management of the Historic Well

The Orphan Well Association (OWA) wants to keep residents informed of activities and the management of the old gas well that is located within the greenspace between 63rd and 64th Streets in the Brennan Subdivision (playground area). There are a few activities planned for the site that we would like Brennan residents to be aware of.

House Removal

The home at 5224 63rd Street (immediately east of the historic well) was purchased by the OWA in late 2022. Since that time the Town of Vermilion has been keeping an eye on the home until a final decision was made for the long-term management of the home and lot.

In the next several weeks (prior to July 30th, 2024) the house structure will be removed from the lot and moved to another location within or near the town. The house move will be coordinated by McRads Building Movers. The garage has been donated to the Town of Vermilion Fire Department and will be removed from the lot shortly after the house structure has been moved.

Once the two structures are removed, Snelgrove Construction will coordinate the removal of any remaining debris including the foundation, fencing, and all concrete (e.g. garage pad, driveway, walkway, etc.). The site will be backfilled, recontoured and seeded to become an extension of the existing greenspace.

The OWA plans to donate the lot to the Town to be managed as greenspace. By purchasing this home and converting the site to greenspace, the OWA have secured unrestricted access to the well should it ever be required in the future. There are no plans to re-enter the well as current management measures are working effectively to ensure public safety.

Ongoing Monitoring

The OWA continues to perform quarterly environmental monitoring events at the well. Results of the monitoring continue to be extremely positive, with no material detections of methane in the soil around the well for the past two years. Gas coming to surface through the well are combusted in a flameless heater system associated with the long-term Active Methane Mitigation System (AMMS) located inside of the small concrete building. Shallow groundwater is also measured quarterly, and we continue to see declining rates of gas in the water with only minor periodic levels detected, usually in mid-winter. These detections are due to the “degassing” of the aquifer as it lowers in the soil profile during winter.

Ambient air is also measured regularly for any methane that may be venting into the air around the well. No material detections of methane have been found at or near the well.

AMMS Unit

Minor upgrades to the surface infrastructure at the site have been ongoing. These include the addition of some automation to the AMMS system that allows us to better monitor the installation remotely.

The relatively small amount of sweet dry gas that the well produces (~18 m³ per day) is fully combusted through a flameless heater system incorporate into the AMMS unit (for comparison, an average hot water tank in a home uses up to 1m³ per day of gas).

As mentioned in previous newsletters, the soil vacuum component of the AMMS system is only in place as a backup should conditions within the wellbore change. There are no plans to run the vacuum other than for periodic maintenance checks.

THANK YOU! – The OWA wants to thank residents of the Brennan community, and the staff and officials of the Town of Vermilion for their continued cooperation and patience respecting this project.

Questions? – If you have questions about this project; contact Dave Marks, Manager – Land and Stakeholders with the OWA (403.297.8555). Or email us at community@orphanwell.ca .

Stay Up-To-Date –Get the most up-to-date information on the project from our website <http://www.orphanwell.ca/community/>

Well Installation



Final AMMS installation at the historic gas well