

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 5

Community Involvement Plan

Peoples Gas Company Crawford Station Manufactured Gas Plant Site

City of Chicago, Cook County, Illinois

April 2008



Introduction

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency prepared this community involvement plan for the Peoples Gas Company Crawford Station Manufactured Gas Plant site in the Little Village community of Chicago in Cook County, Illinois. This plan provides background information on the site, describes activities EPA will perform to keep the public and local officials informed about progress at the site and encourages community involvement during cleanup of the site.

This CIP also discusses the concerns of nearby residents and local officials regarding the site and ways for EPA to address them. The information in this plan is based primarily on discussions with residents, business owners and a local alderman that occurred October 29-30, 2007.

Site Background

EPA has entered into an agreement with Peoples Gas Company to oversee the company's investigation of 11 former manufactured gas plant sites in Chicago. Crawford Station is one of the MGP sites. Peoples Gas will investigate the extent and nature of contamination on each of the sites, and then evaluate potential cleanup options. This process is expected to continue through 2009. EPA, in consultation with Illinois EPA, the City of Chicago and area residents, will determine final cleanup remedies.

All of the properties covered by the agreement are relatively close to the Chicago River, which was a transportation route when the manufactured gas plants operated. These facilities produced gas from coal from the mid-19th through mid-20th centuries. After World War II, coal gas was phased out and replaced with natural gas for cooking and heating. Waste from these operations often included tar, oil, cinders and coke (coal residue). The material also usually contains a group of compounds commonly found in motor oils (polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons), volatile organic compounds (contaminants that evaporate into the air easily) and heavy metals such as arsenic and lead.

Site Description

Location and Site Features

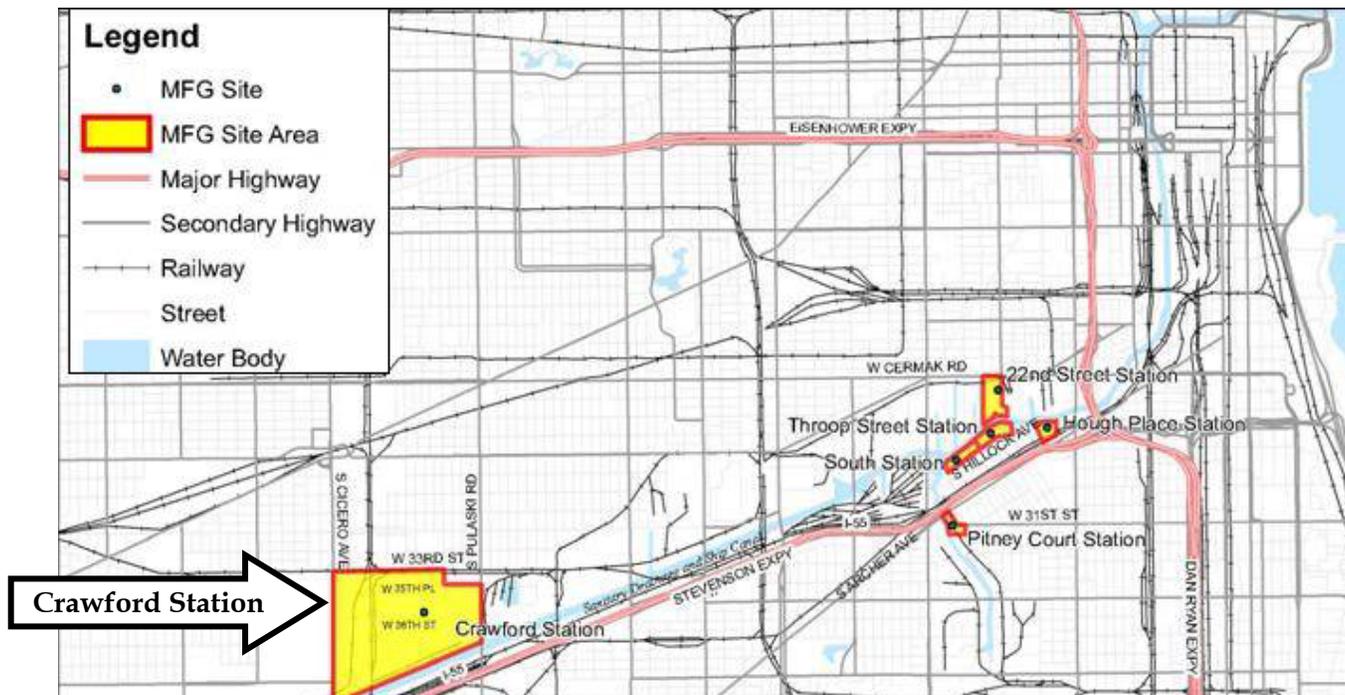
The Crawford Station site is located at 3500 S. Pulaski Rd. in the Little Village neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois. The site is bounded on the south by the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, on the north by the Chicago and Illinois Western Railroad, on the west by the Chicago and Western Indiana Belt Line Railroad, and to the east by Pulaski Road.

History and Cleanup Progress

The Crawford Station site is divided into 21 parcels, totaling 107 acres. Peoples Gas owns four parcels. Peoples Gas uses one parcel as a natural gas regulating and metering facility. Various commercial/industrial buildings and uncovered storage areas exist on the remainder of the site. Peoples Gas also leases a portion of another parcel, which is adjacent to the canal, from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago. Commonwealth Edison, Teds Truck Body, Stanley E. Skorusa, EJS Building Corp., LaGrou

Cold Storage, Kostner/Chicago LLC, Illinois Central Railroad, First American HFC, Wonderview Corp., UIR Campus & Tower and RLR Investments own and/or operate the remaining parcels.

In 1921, the Koppers Company of Pittsburgh and Peoples Gas entered into an agreement whereby Koppers built, financed and operated a byproduct coke plant at the site. Peoples



Gas bought the gas and coke manufactured at the plant for distribution to consumers. Peoples Gas then acquired the facility in 1928. By the late 1930s, the site produced three types of gas: coke oven gas, carbureted water gas and reformed natural gas. During the 1930s, several additions and modifications were made to the plant, including construction of a light oil refining plant, addition of liquefied petroleum gas peak shaving facilities, and conversion of five of the nine water gas sets to produce reformed natural gas and later oil gas. Production was halted temporarily between 1958 and 1962 and permanently after 1963. The station was retired in 1965. Dismantling of the station began in 1956 starting with portions of the coke oven plant. The remainder of the station, including the two 10 million cubic feet gas holders, was dismantled in 1965, and in 1966, Peoples Gas sold 146 acres of the site to First American Realty Company.

VOCs, PAHs, metals and cyanide were detected in ground water and soil samples collected in various locations at the site during Illinois EPA investigations. Evidence of impacts, including tar, tar in fractures, tar-coated sand, naphthalene-type odor and sheen, have been observed at depths of up to 26 feet at various locations at the site.

Site investigations were undertaken on one parcel in 2001, two parcels in 2001 and 2005, and a fourth parcel in 2002. Tar impacts were observed on all of these parcels. Approximately 45 cubic yards of affected soil were removed and disposed of offsite in conjunction with gas pipeline improvements on one parcel. An investigation of the leased parcel began in January 2007.

Community Background

Chicago is the county seat of Cook County. Most of Little Village falls within the aldermanic boundaries of Ward 22.

Known by its residents as the “Mexico of the Midwest,” Little Village, a neighborhood on Chicago’s West Side, is officially part of the South Lawndale Community Area, which over the past 35 years has become a point of entry for Latino immigrants to Chicago. Little Village is home to the largest Mexican-American population in the Midwest and was formerly the home of large Italian, Polish, Czech, Irish, Lithuanian, Croatian and Slovene ethnic communities. For many years, Little Village also was known as “Czech California” due to the largest ethnic group being of Bohemian heritage.

Little Village is located south of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway tracks (Metra’s BNSF Railway Line also runs on these tracks) that run southwest from 18th Street and Western Avenue to 26th Street and Cicero Avenue and north of the South Branch of the Chicago River, and west of the north/south railroad tracks just west of Western Avenue and east of the city limits at Cicero Avenue. Little Village is bounded by the Stevenson Expressway on the south, Kilbourn Avenue on the west, Western Avenue on the east, and the Burlington Northern Railroad on the north.

Little Village is approximately 8 square miles. As of the 2000 census, Little Village had a population of 91,071 (up 12.22 percent from 1990) and was the only Illinois Workforce Advantage¹ community to experience population growth between 1990 and 2000. Little Village is the 10th most densely populated neighborhood in Chicago and must add 101 acres to its 8 square miles in order to meet Chicago’s minimum standard of 2 acres of land per every 1,000 residents.

As of the 2000 census, the population of Little Village was 3.5 percent white, 83 percent Hispanic or Latino of any race, 0.2 percent Asian, and 13 percent African American (up from 9 percent in 1990).² Households in linguistic isolation (a household where the primary language for all members 14 years old and over is not English and English is spoken less than “very well”) increased 3 percent from 1990 to 2000 and equals 38.7 percent.³

At a median age of 20.9 years, the community retains a median population younger than any of Chicago’s 76 other communities. Little Village schools are radically overcrowded. Forty-eight percent of all school-age children are enrolled in grades one through eight; 22.5 percent in grades nine through twelve. The City of Chicago and the Chicago Public Schools concede that five new schools – three elementary, two high schools – are needed in the area to meet the needs of what is the city’s most heavily concentrated juvenile population.

The median income for a household in Little Village is \$32,320, with 26.5 percent of residents living in poverty (up from 22 percent in 1990). Of the 77 communities comprising Chicago, Little Village ranks as the 55th poorest. Fifty-two percent of the labor force (those 16 years and older) is employed, with 42.1 percent of those individuals employed in production or transport.

¹ <http://www.illinois.gov/iwa/littlevillagefacts.cfm>

² <http://www.newcommunities.org/communities/littlevillage/about.asp?communityID=6>

³ 2004 Consortium on Chicago School Research.
http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/web_reports/Schoolageenvironment/communities/comm30.html

To learn about resident and community concerns regarding the site, EPA held several community interviews October 29-30, 2007. EPA talked with the alderman for Ward 22, business owners and residents living in the vicinity of the Peoples Gas sites and asked them about various issues related to the contamination and cleanup at the sites, the community involvement process, the communication process to date and how the community involvement process could be improved.

Community Issues and Concerns

Summary of Community Interviews

Residents, business owners and local officials were interviewed on October 29-30, 2007. Most of those interviewed live or work in the area. In order to accommodate the Spanish speakers that scheduled interviews, EPA included a Spanish translator on the interview team. The results of the meetings showed varying levels of knowledge about contamination at the Peoples Gas site. Several of the residents have lived in the area since childhood, others for 10 years or more. Long-time residents and local officials indicated the sites have received minimal coverage in the local media; however, most of the residents were interested in cleanup and redevelopment activities at the sites.

Below are the specific questions EPA asked and a summary of the answers that were provided at the October 2007 community interviews.

Are you aware of contamination at the Crawford Station, a former manufactured gas plant site on South Pulaski Road near the river?

Most of the residents were not aware of any contamination at the site. Two people knew of some contamination but not specifically at this site. A couple of residents said they were aware of the Crawford generating station, but not this site. They said they knew the site is challenged, and it is a 100-year-old business that has 100-year-old problems that are covered up.

Several business owners were aware of contamination at the site. One was aware of contamination problems when the company was named Peoples Gas Light and Coke. Another became aware of the contamination while purchasing property. One business owner was made aware of the contamination in 2002 when the company went through ownership changes and soil borings were taken and tested.

How long have you been aware of the site?

Most of the residents and businesses interviewed were not aware of the site until being interviewed; however, one business owner has been aware of the site since 2002 when his company was going through ownership changes, and another company was aware of the Crawford Station site when they purchased the property. One long-time resident was aware there was some sort of site, but did not know any details about it. Only one person thought they had read something about the site in a newspaper.

Are you interested in receiving more information about the Crawford Station site? If yes, what's the best way to provide that information to you (e-mail, regular mail)?

Everyone was interested in receiving more information about the site. All of the residents interviewed preferred to get updates by regular mail, while all of the business owners preferred to receive e-mail updates. A couple of business owners preferred to be contacted by e-mail and regular mail.

Do you feel the sites have received adequate coverage by the local/regional media?

Most people said they have not seen anything in the media about this site. One person said they had seen something on the Peoples Gas Web site, and another person said they saw something on television (Channel 66). One business owner said they preferred that there not be a lot of coverage on this site in the local/regional media because they thought it would hurt their business.

What type of media (e.g., newspaper, internet, radio) do you rely on for information? What stations and papers do you prefer?

The majority of those interviewed rely on newspapers for their information. Most people said they read *Hoy* newspaper. Other papers mentioned included the *Little Village Paper* (which is thought to be the *Lawndale News*), *La Raza*, *Chicago Sun Times*, *Lawndale News*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *The Extra*. A couple people commented that they watch Telemundo and Univision, channels 44 and 66, respectively, for their information. One person suggested that *Hoy* is the best newspapers to get information to the head of households in the community.

How frequently do you think public meetings about the site might be held? Would you attend? Where would be the best place to hold a meeting?

No one interviewed responded to how often the public meetings should be held; however, most people said they would attend a public meeting if one was held. Only one person said they were unlikely to attend.

The majority of people said the best place to hold a public meeting is at an area high school or library. A few people mentioned a meeting could be held at the Little Village Park. Some specific suggestions given included using a library with a conference room located on 27th Street and Pulaski Road; a bank like the Bank of America; a new church that is located on Pulaski Road where plenty of parking is available; and a library near Piotrowski (formerly Lawndale) Park.

Are there any other people or groups you think we should talk to about the Peoples Gas sites?

Those interviewed thought several different groups should be contacted to talk about the Peoples Gas sites. A few people suggested that EPA contact the following organizations:

- Little Village Chamber of Commerce
- Little Village Environmental Justice Organization
- Little Village High School
- Little Village Community Development Corporation
- Highway Freight Center Association

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- Eli Whitney School

One person suggested EPA contact the aldermen in the area, and one business owner said they would provide a list of people that should be contacted at a later time.

When possible, site information is posted on EPA’s Web site. Have you used the EPA Region 5 Web site?

The majority of residents and businesses interviewed have not used the EPA Region 5 Web site. Two business owners said they would be using the Web site in the future now that they are aware of it. Only two people said they have used the Web site in the past.

How interested are you in environmental issues in general?

Most residents and business owners are interested in environmental issues. A few people stated specific things they are interested in, including water quality, air pollution, and health and home impacts. One business owner said they are only interested in environmental issues as a real estate developer. Two people said they are not interested in environmental issues.

Have you had contact with government officials about the site? Do you feel these officials have been responsive to your concerns?

The majority of the people interviewed said they had not contacted any government officials about the site. One business owner has contacted Illinois EPA every time they received an access agreement from Peoples Gas, and they did feel they were responsive. The one business owner who responded he had contact with government officials stated his concerns were related to his position as a board member of the Highway Freight Center Association.

**What are your concerns about the contamination at this site?
(If yes to #1)**

One business owner wanted to know the “vertical and latent” extent of the contamination and if the cleanup has been planned out yet or if the area has been defined.

Other people responded that they are worried about their children’s health, the smell, and that people tend to get sicker in this area with sore throats and headaches from the dust in the air. The alderman is concerned that the cleanup be done so it does not affect the neighborhood. He thinks the buildings are considered engineered barriers.

One business was contacted by Peoples Gas to get site access, but he had not signed it because it appears to put the burden on the owner, but others have negotiated and signed. The same business owner is concerned about potential property impacts and if there would be damage to the infrastructure. One business owner is concerned with the shipping location and the disturbance to the business operation and not the environment.

Only one person said they did not have any concerns about contamination at this site.

What risks do you think the site, in their current state, pose to you or your children?

There were several different responses to what risks the site poses. A couple people stated that asthma is more common in the neighborhood and that it might be due to the site. Other

risks that were concerns include things blowing off garbage trucks, the smell of chlorine in the air when it is warm out, and work on the roads. A few people did not have any answer to this question, and one person said they thought the site did not pose a health risk.

Would you like to see these sites redeveloped? How?

About half of the people interviewed did not have any ideas on how the sites should be redeveloped. One person said they just want the area to be clean.

The alderman that was interviewed said he thinks there should be something developed between 33rd Street and the river to spur industrial development, which would bring more jobs to the neighborhood. In addition, frontage on Pulaski Road could be commercial space, pushing industrial space back 300 feet. A couple business owners said commerce should be a priority in redeveloping the sites because jobs are needed in the area. A couple of residents would like to see additional schools and parks developed in the area.

Proposed Community Involvement Activities

The next step for EPA is to address the concerns and questions that were expressed about the site. To do this, EPA is proposing to keep people informed by:

Sending Fact Sheets

EPA will develop a mailing list for the site and will mail fact sheets to those on the site mailing list as a way to provide updates on the site and its activities. EPA will mail fact sheets periodically to inform the public about upcoming meetings and important technical information. The fact sheets will be written and printed in both Spanish and English.

In addition to sending fact sheets via first class mail, EPA will distribute fact sheets at locations in the neighborhood where they can be conveniently picked up by residents. EPA will also develop an e-mail distribution list for interested parties who prefer e-mail. Each fact sheet will be sent to e-mail recipients as a “.pdf” file at the same time the fact sheet is mailed.

All site fact sheets will be posted on EPA’s Web site.

Holding Periodic Community Meetings

EPA will hold community meetings at key cleanup milestones. The meetings will be announced via newspaper notices, e-mail messages and fact sheets. A Spanish translator will be available at the meetings and meeting materials will be provided in Spanish and English. The preferred location for meetings is the Toman Branch of the Chicago Public Library.

Staying in Contact with Stakeholders

In addition to fact sheets and public meetings, the site e-mail distribution list that will be developed based on interest could be used to provide regular, concise updates ranging from a few sentences to a few paragraphs.

Maintaining Information Repositories

The reference desk at the Toman Branch of the Chicago Public Library will be established as the official information repository for documents and other site materials. Documents and site materials also are located at EPA's Record Center. See Appendix A for location and hours.

Working with Local Media

The most widely read newspaper by local residents is *Hoy* followed by *Lawndale News*. It is expected that EPA would publish all notices in *Hoy* and *Lawndale News* as appropriate. A contact list of area media is included in Appendix A. Fact sheets and other information will be sent to the media contact list for their use.

Using the Internet

EPA will maintain and regularly update a Web site, which will contain information about the site, its activities and upcoming meetings. EPA will place technical documents, including this one, on the Web site. Whenever possible, Spanish language version of the documents will be included on the Web site.

Having a Presence

EPA's community involvement coordinator and remedial project manager will respond to inquiries from those interested in the Crawford Station site throughout the cleanup. They also will be available to speak to local citizen groups, upon request. EPA's toll-free telephone number and the project staff's direct numbers and e-mail addresses will be included on all community involvement material.

Appendix A

Peoples Gas Company Crawford Station Manufactured Gas Plant Site

Contact List

Federal Elected Officials

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Neighborhood Associations

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Room 711
Chicago, IL
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m, Monday – Friday

Public Meeting Locations

Chicago Public Library
Toman Branch
2708 S. Pulaski Rd.
Chicago, IL 60623
Phone: 312-745-7660
Fax: 312-745-1621

Media -Newspapers

Lawndale News
5416 W. 25th St.
Cicero, IL 60804
Phone: 708-656-6400
Fax: 708-656-2433

Chicago Sun-Times
350 N. Orleans, 10th Floor
Chicago, IL 60654
Phone: 312-321-3000

Chicago Tribune
435 N. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60611-4041
Newsroom/Editorial: Phone: 312-222-4440

Hoy
435 N. Michigan Ave., 22nd Floor
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-527-8478

La Raza
6001 N. Clark St.
Chicago, IL 60660
Phone: 773-273-2900
Fax: 773-273-2927

The Extra
3906 W. North Ave.
Chicago, IL 60647-4618
Phone: 773-252-3534
Fax: 773-252-6031
E-mail: info@extranews.net

El Imparcial
3116 S. Austin Blvd.
Cicero, IL 60804
Phone: 708-656-9800
Fax: 708-656-6679
E-mail: impanews@aol.com

Media – Television

WBBM (CBS-Channel 2)
630 N. McClurg Ct.
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-944-6000
Fax: 312-202-3878

WCIU (Independent-Channel 26)
26 N. Halsted St.
Chicago, IL 60661
Phone: 312-705-2600
Fax: 312-705-2656

WFBT (Independent-Channel 19)
26 N. Halsted St.
Chicago, IL 60661
Phone: 312-705-2623
Fax: 312-705-2620

WFLD (Fox-Channel 32)
205 N. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60601
Phone: 312-565-5532
Fax: 312-819-1332

WGN (Warner Bros.-Channel 9)
2501 W. Bradley Pl.
Chicago, IL 60618
Phone: 773-528-2311
Fax: 773-528-6050

WLS (ABC-Channel 7)
190 N. State St.
Chicago, IL 60601
Phone: 312-750-7777
Fax: 312-899-8019

WMAQ (NBC-Channel 5)
454 N. Columbus Dr.
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-836-5555
Fax: 312-527-5925

WPWR (UPN-Channel 50)
2151 N. Elston Ave.
Chicago, IL 60614
Phone: 773-276-5050
Fax: 773-276-6477

WSNS (Hispanic-Channel 44)
454 N. Columbus Dr., 5th Floor
Chicago, IL 60622
Phone: 312-836-3000
Fax: 312-836-3232

WTTW (PBS-Channel 11)
5400 N. Saint Louis Ave.
Chicago, IL 60625
Phone: 773-583-5000
Fax: 773-509-5304

WYCC (PBS-Channel 20)
7500 S. Pulaski Rd.
Chicago, IL 60652
Phone: 773-838-7878
Fax: 773-581-2071

Spanish channels

WFBT (Multi-Cultural-Channel 23)
Weigel Broadcasting
26 N. Halsted St.
Chicago, IL 60661
Phone: 312-705-2623
Fax: 312-705-2666

WGBO (Spanish-Channel 66)
Univision Television Group
541 N. Fairbanks Ct., Suite 1100
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-670-1000
Fax: 312-494-6491

WSNS (Spanish-Channel 44)
Telmundo Group, Inc.
454 N. Columbus
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-836-3000
Fax: 312-836-3034

Media -Radio

WBBM-AM Newsradio 780
Two Prudential Plz., Suite 110
Chicago, IL 60601
Phone: 800-784-6397
Fax: 312-297-7822

WGN-AM Radio 720
435 N. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-222-4700
Fax: 312-222-5165

WLS-AM Radio 890
190 N. State St.
Chicago, IL 60601
Phone: 312-357-1389

Spanish Radio Stations

WRTE-FM Radio 90.5
1401 W. 18th St.
Chicago, IL 60608
Phone: 312-455-9455
Fax: 312-455-9755
E-mail: info@radioarte.org
Web site: www.radioarte.org

Univision Communications, Inc.
Jerry Ryan, General Manager
625 N. Michigan Ave., #300
Chicago, IL 60611

La Que Buena-FM (105.1)
Phone: 312-642-1051
Fax: 312-981-1850

Pasion-FM (106.7)
Phone: 312-751-5566
Fax: 312-981-1850

VIVA-FM (93.5)
VIVA-FM (103.1)
Phone: 312-266-9848
Fax: 312-981-1850

WIND-AM (560)
WOJO-FM (105.1)
WRTO-AM (1200)
WVIV-FM (103.1)
WVIX-FM (93.5)
Phone: 312-981-1800
Fax: 312-981-1820

Kovas Communications
Frank Kovas, General Manager
2100 Lee St.
Evanston, IL 60202

WONX-AM (1590)
847-475-1590
Fax: 773-277-1590

Spanish Broadcasting System
Mario Paez, General Manager
150 N. Michigan Ave., #1040
Chicago, IL 60601

WDEK-FM (92)
WKIE-FM (92.5)
WKIF-FM (92.7)
WLEY-FM (107.9)
Phone: 312-920-9500
Fax: 312-920-9514
E-mail: mpaez@sbschicago.com
Web site: www.spanishbroadcasting.com

Moody Broadcasting
Gerson Garcia, General Manager
820 N. La Salle Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60610

WMBI-AM (1110)
Phone: 312-329-4281
Fax: 312-329-8989
E-mail: radio.esperanza@moody.edu
Web site: www.radiomoody.com