

Work Officially Begins On Natural Gas Pipeline Project Under Jamaica Bay

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Work has officially begun on the [natural gas pipeline project](#) that will run underneath Jamaica Bay.

National Grid spokeswoman Karen Young says the utility started preparatory work for construction of two gas pipelines underneath Jamaica Bay's Rockaway Inlet. The pipelines will be 1.6 miles in length and 50 feet below the seabed. Work began last Friday.

Young said that she was not sure exactly when drilling would commence under the Rockaway Inlet.

In a later phase of construction on its "Brooklyn/Queens Interconnect project", National Grid will connect these cross-Bay lines to customers in Brooklyn and Queens via a new gas meter and regulating station to be housed within a historic hangar at Floyd Bennett Field. Gas entering the meter station will eventually link to an existing gas main on Flatbush Avenue.

National Grid's new delivery capacity will be supported by an off-shore feeder pipeline to be constructed by Oklahoma-based Williams Cos. The company manages the 10,000-mile Transco natural gas pipeline, which runs parallel to the Rockaway coast.

Much of the construction on the pipeline will take place in Gateway National Recreation Area, a 26,000-acre National Park, which includes ocean-facing Jacob Riis Park and the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge.

The National Grid portion of the Rockaway pipeline project was reviewed under the New York City Environmental Quality Review Act. In December 2011 the city issued a negative declaration, meaning that the city found the project "would not have an adverse impact on the environment." Because of this, the project did not require a public review process or full-scale environmental review.

Williams' off-shore pipeline and meter station proposal, however, is still working its way through a federal environmental review process.

The company said in a statement: "The project also has all other required city, state, and federal approvals." The utility expects that this first phase of construction will be completed in May.

National Grid noted the environmental benefits of converting homes and businesses from oil to natural gas. “Each conversion is equivalent to taking 15 cars off the road for a year,” the company said. Local environmental groups have questioned whether the pipeline project will impact marine life off the Rockaway coast and whether it is an appropriate use for a national park.

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