

Monitoring wells to search for contaminants at site

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BY MEGAN BURROW

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Managing Editor

Monitoring wells will be installed in River Edge along Rutgers Place and Kinderkamack Road as part of an environmental investigation of the former Huffman Koos property at Route 4 and Main Street.

Development of the site stalled last year after its owners learned the vacant property would require inspection by a remediation expert from the state and an environmental cleanup before moving forward.

The six temporary wells on Kinderkamack Road and two permanent bedrock wells on Rutgers Place will be installed by Excel Environmental Resources, Inc., a North Brunswick Company. The temporary wells will stay open for a period of 48 hours while testing is conducted. The Rutgers Place wells will remain open for the duration of the investigation.

Eric Mertz, a representative of Excel Environmental, spoke at the council's Jan. 18 meeting to inform the governing body of the plans. He said the company spoke with [Bergen County](#) about installing permanent wells on Kinderkamack, but was informed that it does not allow monitoring wells on county roads. All of the wells will be in public rights of way, either on the sidewalk itself or on the grass.

Mertz said that a Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) permit will be needed for the wells, and once it is obtained work can begin. A preconstruction meeting will be held between the company, the borough engineer, and the police department. Traffic monitoring will be necessary during the installation, said Mertz, particularly along Kinderkamack Road.

Mertz said that the DEP requires a minimum of two years of groundwater monitoring if nothing is found that is in need of remediation. Construction at the site can, however, begin while the investigation and remediation are ongoing.

"We're just in the investigation phase right now," Mertz said. "Our goal is to get the project moving along enough so that the redevelopment of the property can start as soon as possible. With remediation there are so many variables involved. We're just in the phase where we are just finding out where the contaminants are, if they've spread, and if they have spread, how great the contamination is."