

Gas leak leads to Atchison evacuation

(KAIR)--An evacuation Tuesday afternoon in the area of Atchison's riverfront.

Atchison Fire Chief Ted Graf says the action was taken after a gas line was struck in the alley south of Atchison Wholesale Grocery. "There's a subcontracted utility company that's doing some boring for utility replacement in the area of the alley just south of the Atchison Wholesale Grocery location. Apparently they struck a natural gas line while doing their boring. This led to the spread of natural gas, potentially underground" Graf told MSC News. "Kansas Gas Service, when they arrived, detected high levels of natural gas under the surface, which immediately caused a concern for the surrounding buildings in that location."

The mandatory evacuation, which Graf said affected the Atchison Wholesale building, both MGP buildings, the Guidance Center and the Apartment Complex at 201 Main, and Mueller's Locker Room, was lifted shortly before 2:00 Tuesday afternoon.

Graf said around 60 to 70 people were evacuated, with traffic also kept out of the affected area.

As Kansas Gas Service worked to repair the broken line, Graf said Atchison County EMS, the Atchison Police Department, and Atchison County Emergency Management joined his crews in providing assistance at the scene.

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