



THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE  
CONSERVATION OF THE INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

**TICCIH**

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## **The international importance of the Värtan gasworks in Stockholm as an Industrial Monument**

In the development of the first European industrial-age urban networks, gas supply preceded even the water supply systems. The Värtan gasworks complex defines the scale of big city gas supply, based on the conversion of hard coal into town gas. Nearly a city within the city, in Stockholm the wealth of buildings that portray this development has survived in a nearly unaltered shape for more than a hundred years. Ferdinand Boberg's gasworks hold a unique position worldwide as a landmark example of gas supply technology and architecture on the threshold of the second industrial revolution.

Furthermore, here we have the entire system of a metropolitan gaswork complex, a unique witness of the social and technical development from the nineteenth century to our time. Thus the Värtan gasworks in Stockholm with their five gas holders form an encyclopaedia of this type of construction in an unbroken sequence like no other place worldwide.

In the Värtan gasworks we have:

- two 1893 and 1900 telescopic gas holders in their first phase of development as wet (water-sealed) low-pressure gas holders with brick mantles
- one 1912 freestanding telescopic gasholder using oil as seal
- one 1932 M.A.N. piston-type gasholder with a fixed tank construction, exceeded in height by only one example in the world (Oberhausen/Germany)
- one 1972 high-pressure spherical gas holder

Although originally there existed some other gasworks complexes in the world that may have matched Stockholm's quality, not one of them today exhibits the completeness of the different components that make up such an urban gaswork complex. A few examples can illustrate:

1) Vienna: from a wealth of buildings only the brick shells of the four gas holders have survived in a drastically altered shape and context.

2) Amsterdam: although thirteen buildings from different periods survived here, not a single entire gas holder is amongst them.


3) Augsburg: this plant comes nearest to the Stockholm complex insofar as here buildings as well as gas holders have survived. The four existing gas holders however reach neither the time span that Stockholm offers, nor the technological variety of the Värtan gasworks.

4) Zurich: along with some existing buildings here only one gas holder of the telescope type has survived.

In all parts of the world where there are protection laws for our built heritage, the Värtan gasworks exemplifies the definition of internationally eminent monuments of architecture and technology of the 19th and 20th century. It is therefore of vital importance that important elements of this comprehensive structure like Gasholder 4 are preserved to maintain the outstanding significance of the entire complex. Gasholder 4 is essential to maintain the chronologically unbroken line of gasholder construction that covers the entire development period of this critical technological and architectural type,

This assessment is based on a worldwide survey undertaken by members of TICCIH, the International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage. Founded in 1975, this organization, affiliated with ICOMOS and UNESCO, offers the primary source of global expertise and perspective in the field of the heritage of industry and technology.

Respectfully,



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