

Radhakrishnan, Krish

From: Hotz, Jonathan [Jonathan.Hotz@edelman.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2003 3:59 PM
To: 'Theodorellys, Penny'
Cc: Gilsenan, Michael; Radhakrishnan, Krish
Subject: RE: Article for Review: DEP Completes Downtown Cleanup

NYC DEP Completes Downtown Cleanup

On March 31, 2003, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) completed work removing potentially hazardous dust and debris that accumulated on the roofs, windows and facades of downtown buildings following the World Trade Center collapse. DEP crews cleaned the surfaces of 221 building, or more than 3.6 million square feet of exterior building space, during the 10-month long project.

We finished work on March 26, 2003, the contract ended March 31, 2003.

The DEP began inspecting buildings in Lower Manhattan in January 2002 for exterior residue containing more than 1 percent of asbestos, the threshold set by the EPA, the U.S. Department of Labor, New York State and the DEP. Among a small sample of buildings close to the WTC site, 48 percent tested positive for asbestos contamination. This finding prompted the DEP to begin a comprehensive inspection of the more than one thousand buildings in the area.

"There was great concern among people in Lower Manhattan," said Robert Avaltroni, Deputy Commissioner of the DEP. "We needed to act quickly to relieve that anxiety so people who live and work in the area could move forward with their lives."

The DEP inspected 1,073 buildings in Lower Manhattan, of which 323 - approximately 30 percent - were found to have some form of asbestos-contaminated WTC debris and were earmarked for cleaning to help alleviate public concern regarding potential exposure to asbestos and other contaminants.

We visually inspected for debris. If debris was present, we earmarked it for cleaning. We did not perform additional sampling because of the original results. Therefore, it is not accurate to state that 30% was found to be asbestos-contaminated. We could state "were found to have been impacted by WTC debris".

The DEP notified the owners of the affected buildings, giving them the option to have the cleanup done by the DEP or through an independent contractor of their own choosing. The owners of 102 buildings elected to have their buildings cleaned independently. (The DEP has since re-inspected

5/13/2003

those buildings and certified that asbestos-containing material had been removed.)

Same as above. For accuracy, "verified that WTC debris had been removed".

From June 2002 through March 2003, DEP cleanup crews cleaned the surfaces of 221 buildings, totaling approximately 3.7 million square feet of exterior building space. DEP crews reached building surfaces with cherry pickers, scaffolds and platforms. They used low-pressure spray-guns as well as their own hands to clean the debris, often working around the clock, weather permitting. Throughout the process of inspection, cleanup and re-inspection, the DEP worked closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the EPA.

Liz Berger, a long-time resident and employee in the area, said she appreciates the effort. "The City and the DEP were genuinely interested in understanding the issue and solving the problem," she said. "Thanks to their dedication, I feel much better in my apartment and in the building where I work."

"We're proud to have done our part to make Lower Manhattan a better place to live," said Avaltroni.

For more information on the DEP's exterior cleanup program and other environmental initiatives, please visit the DEP's web site.

5/13/2003