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EPA/NYC CLEAN UP / TESTING PROGRAM

May 6, 2002 (1:08PM)

Goal: Reinforce NYC residents and worker populations' confidence and protection regarding any potential health risk concerns which might result from the exposure in their indoor environments, on a long term basis, to potential compounds of concern resulting from the collapse of the WTC buildings. This will serve to expedite and enhance the economic revitalization of Lower Manhattan.

1. Direct Assistance to Residents and Residential Building Owners

Objective: Provide residents and residential building owners, who are concerned that their apartments may have debris/dust from the WTC impacts remaining, a means of getting professional contractor clean up support, or other assistance, when requested.

Program: EPA will solicit participation in this direct assistance program through public announcements. An EPA hotline will be established to receive requests from the public.

The assistance will include the following options:

- a) Cleaning within apartments and building open spaces, using trained, certified abatement contractors, followed by air asbestos testing. Contractors' employees will not be required to use asbestos abatement protective clothing or respirators unless OSHA determines such use is required or unless sampling results exceed airborne standards. An oversight function will be designed into this initiative to assure that when large amounts of visible dust have accumulated in apartments, and/or no cleaning has been performed to date, or any other unexpected circumstance arises that puts employees at risk; no cleaning will take place, or cleaning will immediately be discontinued until EPA, OSHA and the City coordinate to ensure that the employees performing the cleaning use appropriate personal protective clothing and equipment commensurate with the potential for employee risk.
- b) Testing for airborne asbestos within residences or building areas. (Should testing results identify an airborne asbestos problem, arrangements can be made rapidly to have professional clean up done.)
- c) Providing HEPA vacuums to residents who request to perform their own cleaning on an ongoing basis.

Responsibility: EPA and DEP will develop the scope of work. DEP will procure and put in place the necessary contracts. EPA will administer and supervise the contracts.

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2. Pilot Building Cleaning Effort to Confirm Cleaning Techniques

Objective: Evaluate the effectiveness of clean up techniques which have been recommended for apartment clean up, that is, wet wiping, wet mopping and use of HEPA filtered vacuums, in preventing inhalation exposure to asbestos and other fibrous materials, as well as other potential indicator compounds.

Program: EPA will clean one unoccupied building to confirm and test the techniques.

Responsibility: EPA will develop the scope of work. EPA will procure and put in place the necessary contracts. EPA will administer and supervise the contracts.

3. Cleaning of Debris-Laden Unoccupied, Uncleaned Buildings

Objective: Since the debris removal from the immediate areas of destruction in the WTC complex is nearing completion; the remaining unoccupied, uncleaned buildings must be cleaned. This will prevent debris/dust from being re-entrained in air and/or re-contaminating the nearby areas with debris/dust.

Program: NYC will clean the remaining unoccupied (residential and commercial), uncleaned buildings near the WTC site that contain WTC-debris. NYC will work with building owners to determine reasons that these buildings have not been cleaned yet. If building owners are not able to expeditiously clean their property, NYC will proceed.

Responsibility: EPA and DEP will develop the scope of work. DEP will procure and put in place the necessary contracts. DEP will administer and supervise the contracts.

4. Clean Up of Exteriors of Buildings with Residual Debris/Dust

Objective: To eliminate remaining debris/dust resulting from the WTC collapse on building exteriors in Lower Manhattan thereby assuring this material will not become re-entrained in the air at a future time, thus creating a potential exposure to the public.

Program: NYC DEP will contract for the cleaning of the exteriors of approximately 250 buildings in Lower Manhattan. EPA, NYCDEP and OSHA will oversee contractors.

Responsibility: DEP with assistance from EPA and NYSDOL will administer and supervise the contracts.

5. Creating a Data System with Existing Information Collected by NYC from the Private Sector on Environmental Testing Results and Clean Up Activity

Objective: Organize private sector data submitted into a user friendly data system which will allow for a maximum amount of data to be considered in informing the public and in evaluating effectiveness and protectiveness of cleaning techniques and the potential for any increased long term risk to the public posed by indoor environments by the appropriate health agencies.

Program: NYC has received information on clean up actions and air monitoring from the building owners of a significant portion of the buildings in Lower Manhattan. Other information may also be available on building status. Making all such data available in an organized and readily accessible way will enhance ability to assess potential concerns related to indoor air environment.

Responsibility: NYC DOIIT through NYC OEM will develop the scope of work. DOIIT will procure and put in place the necessary contracts. DOIIT will administer and supervise the contracts.

6. Sampling to Determine Background Levels of Potential Contaminants

Objective: Establish a NYC specific quantitative data set which will enable a better evaluation of pre- 9/11 conditions likely to have existed in Lower Manhattan. This will assist in future evaluation of whether any further clean up advice or action will be necessary.

Program: EPA will sample residences in areas of NYC unaffected by WTC-related debris to establish what may be considered pre-existing levels of potential compounds of concern. This sampling will occur in areas determined appropriate based upon improbability of any impacts from the WTC collapse and fire. This will assist EPA, ATSDR NYSDOH and NYCDOH in evaluating how the potential compounds of concern from the WTC disaster relate to pre-existing conditions. NYCDOH will obtain access agreements and prepare notifications to residents. Potential indicators of concern will be identified and air and debris/dust samples will be taken and analyzed for these compounds.

Responsibility: EPA and DOH will develop the scope of work. EPA will procure and put in place the necessary contracts. EPA will administer and supervise the contracts.

Future Possible Action as Follow up to Above Action Plan

Identifying the Need for any further Potential Clean Up or Testing Support for Lower Manhattan

Objective: Be prepared to establish any necessary further Action Plan items for clean up or testing or information on clean up techniques which may emerge out of the various data collection, analysis and organizational efforts

Program: Unknown at this time. Must await results of above efforts.