



**Department of
Environmental
Protection**

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**Joel A. Miele Sr., P.E.
Commissioner**

Robert C. Avaltroni
Deputy Commissioner
Bureau of
Environmental Compliance
Tel (718) 595-4418
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Allesandra Sumowicz
FROM: Robert C. Avaltroni *RA*
SUBJECT: NYC Department of Health Press Release
DATE: February 7, 2002

The Department of Environmental Protection's comments to the New York City Department of Health's press release.

- Please highlight the first sentence in the second paragraph.
- Please insert the following between the third and last sentence of second paragraph:

As stated above, there were no airborne asbestos fibers detected in the air sampling.

Thank you.

*Please call when received
for clarification
718 595-4418*



www.nyc.gov/dep

(718) DEP-HELP

FEB-07-2002 14:40

MAYOR'S OFC of ENV. COORD

212 999 7024 P.01/04



Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination
100 Gold Street, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10038
Tel. 212-788-2924, Fax 212-788-2941

Fax

To:

Bob Avaltroni

From:

Lee I. IwanTel. 212-788- 2929

Date:

7 Feb 02

Pages (including cover sheet):

4

Comments: ☐ Urgent ☐ For your review ☐ Reply ASAP
☐ Please comment ☐ Per your request

DOH's latest version of the
press release

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FEB-07-2002 17:22

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Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination
100 Gold Street, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10038
Tel. 212-788-2924, Fax 212-788-2941

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To:

Jessica Leighton 676-6326
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From:

Lee Flan

Tel. 212-788-2929

Date:

7 Feb

Pages (including cover sheet):

2

Comments: ☐ Urgent ☐ For your review ☐ Reply ASAP
☐ Please comment ☐ Per your request

Here are the DEP
Comments on press release, with
MOEC edits.

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FEB-07-2002 15:43

MAYOR'S OFC of ENV. COORD

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as cough, and irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat. The data from air quality tests thus far have been reassuring. None of the testing ~~done~~ to date has shown results that would indicate long-term health impacts. However, conclusive scientific knowledge about the potential health hazards of some substances is not available."

"DOH recognizes residents' concerns and will continue to work closely with local, ~~State~~ and Federal agencies to monitor air quality and to inform the public of findings as soon as results are available. The City Departments of Health and Mental Health are addressing residents' mental health concerns by promoting the ongoing *Project Liberty* program, a ~~Statewide~~ disaster-recovery initiative that offers free crisis counseling, education, and referral services to anyone affected by the World Trade Center disaster (1-800-LIFENET)." Dr. Frieden continued.

"Additionally, DOH has been working with ~~the~~ U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to develop a protocol for a World Trade Center Registry, which, if funded, would generate and maintain a database that can be used as a basis for conducting studies ~~that can~~ provide a more complete picture of short- and long-term health and mental health impacts among the affected populations," Dr. Frieden concluded.

What Was Sampled

At the request of DOH, ATSDR conducted tests in 59 apartments in 30 geographically representative buildings in lower Manhattan in November and December 2001. Testing was also conducted in four buildings above 59th Street not impacted by migrating dusts from the World Trade Center site to provide information on the background level of various substances present indoors in New York City. Using ~~widely~~ accepted testing methods, the agency looked for several materials that are common building components ~~or~~ could potentially cause short and long-term health problems. Each set of tests included samples for air and for settled dust, and these samples were analyzed for fiber-like materials - asbestos, fibrous glass - and for other particles including silica, gypsum, mica, and calcite. Additional information about the indoor testing initiative is available on the DOH Web site at nyc.gov/health.

A comprehensive report on this testing will be available this spring. Final test results on substances other than asbestos will be released to the public as soon as they become available. Results of outdoor sampling since September 11 for air, water, and dust - including asbestos and particulate matter are posted on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) website, epa.gov, and can also be found on the New York City Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) website at nyc.gov/dep. WTC-related information can also be found nyc.gov/health.

Health Information about Asbestos and Fiberglass

Exposure to asbestos is associated with asbestosis (scarring of the lungs) and cancer. The risk of developing these diseases depends on the level (amount) and the length of time exposed (duration). The likelihood of developing disease from limited, short-term, low-level exposure is low. There is no reliable test that can indicate whether an individual has had low-level exposures to asbestos. In the occupational setting, where the duration and intensity of asbestos exposure can be greater, there is a higher risk to workers. Workers at the WTC site need to use the ~~correct~~ protective equipment to reduce exposure.

For that reason, DOH advises that

appropriate

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Exposure to some forms of fibrous glass, like fiberglass, can cause cough, and eye, nose, skin, and throat irritation. Long-term health effects associated with fibrous glass are not completely known and standards for measurement of fibrous glass in environmental samples are not well established. Although fiberglass is classified as a possible carcinogen, recent studies of more than 30,000 industrial workers who worked with fiberglass found no conclusive evidence of an increased risk of cancer.

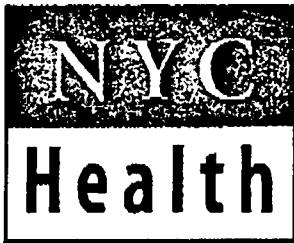
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THE NEW YORK CITY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
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NEW YORK, N.Y. 10013
(212) 295-5335/5336 FAX: (212) 941-2156

nyc.gov/health

THOMAS R. FRIEDEN, MD, MPH
Commissioner

SANDRA MULLIN
Associate Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, February 7, 2002

CONTACT: Sandra Mullin/Greg Butler
(212) 295-5335/5336; (877) 640-1347

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PRESENTS FINDINGS FROM
INDOOR AIR SAMPLING IN LOWER MANHATTAN

Analysis of Air Samples Taken from Residential Buildings in Lower Manhattan Indicates No Elevation of Asbestos in Air, Low Levels of Asbestos and Some Fiberglass Found in Dust Samples. DOH Reminds Residents of Importance of Cleaning to Reduce Dust.

As part of an ongoing effort to assess the environmental impact of the World Trade Center (WTC) disaster and to respond to public health concerns, the New York City Department of Health (DOH) in collaboration with the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) conducted indoor and outdoor tests of thirty residential buildings in lower Manhattan.

The tests examined samples of both air and dust. The air samples from (inside? outside?) the buildings showed ^{elevated above (what?)} ~~no elevated levels of asbestos were found in the air samples taken from the buildings.~~ In addition to the air testing, dust samples showed low levels of asbestos in some samples and the presence of fiberglass in some other dust samples. Asbestos and fiberglass can be a problem if they become airborne. While these findings were not unexpected, they underscore the importance of proper cleaning methods to minimize exposure. ~~to asbestos and fiberglass~~

^{them of} To inform residents about the test results, letters are being sent to building owners and residents. ^{DOH is sending} flyers are also being distributed in the neighborhood. The letters and flyers emphasize the importance of following DOH's cleaning recommendations to prevent dust from becoming airborne (especially while work continues at the WTC site). In addition to the information being distributed to residents, DOH ~~has set up~~ community meetings ^{is soon} co-sponsored with Community Board One to directly address any remaining concerns. ^{DOH advises} ^{of lower Manhattan} ^{distributing}

Specifically, residents are being advised to use a wet mop, damp cloth, or a high efficiency particulate air filter (HEPA) vacuum to clean dust from hard surfaces, and HEPA vacuums to clean carpets, upholstery, and other items that cannot be cleaned by wet wiping. To prevent the recirculation of dust, residents ~~are advised not~~ to sweep with "dry" brooms, or to use dusters or vacuums that do not have approved HEPA filters. Since fiberglass can be irritating to the skin, rubber gloves can be used to provide skin protection. ^{DOH also advises} Residents were also advised to avoid carrying dust into their buildings from outdoors (e.g., by taking off shoes). ^{other}

New York City Health Commissioner Thomas R. Frieden, MD, MPH said, "Since the collapse of the World Trade Center, an event that resulted in the release of large amounts of dust and airborne ^{particles} substances, some residents of lower Manhattan have reported short-term health problems such

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"Additionally, DOH has been working with ^{the} U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to develop a protocol for a World Trade Center Registry, which, if funded, would generate and maintain a database that can be used as a basis for conducting studies ^{intended to} that can provide a more complete picture of short- and long-term health and mental health impacts among the affected populations," Dr. Frieden concluded.

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