



Press Release

New York City Department of Health

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Sandra Mullin/Greg Butler

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(212) 295-5335/5336

NYC HEALTH DEPARTMENT RESPONDS TO CONCERNS ABOUT AIR QUALITY IN LOWER MANHATTAN

New York City Health Commissioner Neal L. Cohen, M.D., today informed New Yorkers that despite the smoky conditions in areas of lower Manhattan that are close to the World Trade Center site, test results from the ongoing monitoring of airborne contaminants indicate that the levels continue to be below the level of concern to public health. Nonetheless, while debris continues to be disturbed, and while flare ups of smoke continue to permeate the downtown area, air testing results will continue to be monitored, and appropriate health recommendations will be issued as necessary.

Dr. Cohen added, "As work continues at the disaster site, the presence of dust and smoke odor in the downtown area has been of understandable concern to residents. However, air monitoring by Federal, State and City agencies has indicated that the levels of particulate matter being detected are below the level of public health concern and do not pose long-term health risks to the general public. Some individuals with underlying respiratory conditions, such as asthma, may experience exacerbation of symptoms, and other persons may also experience short-term discomfort including irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat."

In addition to air monitoring activities, efforts are being made daily to suppress dust and smoke at the World Trade Center disaster site. Results of daily dust sampling conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is available online at epa.gov. Fact sheets detailing Health Department recommendations pertaining to air quality, asbestos, safely re-occupying homes and buildings, and worker safety are available online at nyc.gov/health. For more information about all Health Department activities, New Yorkers can call (212) 227-5269.

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