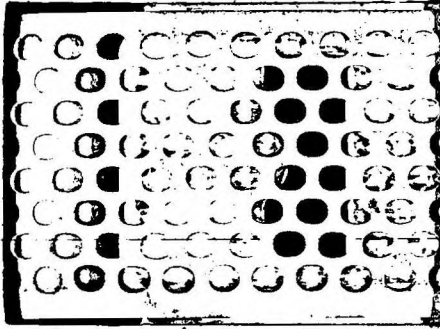




ROBERT C. AVALTRONI, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
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Chris,

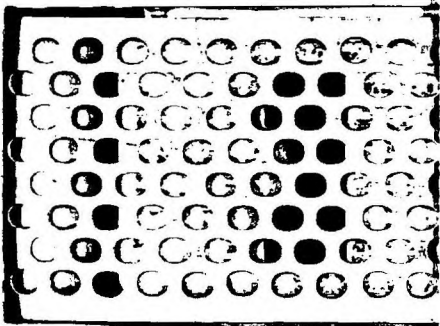
When you speak with Jane, please emphasize how important it is that they get the proper message out. They gave Barbara Stewart a comment that "The agency says ordinary home cleaning cannot remove asbestos, toxic metals or dioxins. Specialized cleaning agents and vacuums are required" (see attached).

This goes against every recommendation made to the public and creates confusion. We are trying to convey confidence to the folks in Lower Manhattan.

This is quite an experience.

Bob

c: Shauna Grob



METRO WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2002

CITY



Justin Lane for The New York Times

ian Jr. handed out fliers yesterday at a Parkway. His challenger, Sandra Roper, preme Court building in Brooklyn.



U.S. to Test for Contaminants In 250 Downtown Apartments

By BARBARA STEWART

The federal Environmental Protection Agency announced plans yesterday to test for dioxins and toxic metals in a sampling of Lower Manhattan apartments whose interiors were coated with ash and dust from the World Trade Center's collapse.

The agency said the testing, along with the asbestos cleanup and testing program announced in May, will be the largest cleanup in its history.

"We've talked to scientists and experts and doctors and community groups and tenants' groups," an agency official said. "We feel — and scientists agree — that we need to act now and not spend months or years studying the situation."

The agency plans to test 250 apartments for dioxins and toxic metals like lead and mercury. Those apartments will be randomly chosen from the approximately 3,600 apartments whose residents have requested asbestos cleaning and testing. An additional 1,000 apartments will be tested for asbestos at the residents' request and cleaned only if their levels exceeded federal standards.

The agency said that if tests indicated unacceptably high levels of dioxins and toxic metals, the apartments would be cleaned and an expansion of tests and cleanups would be considered. The cost of a laboratory analysis of dioxins is three times that of an asbestos analysis.

All testing and cleaning should be-

gin in September, the agency said. All residents south of Canal and Pike Streets in Lower Manhattan are eligible, as are landlords who want their buildings' common areas — lobbies, halls and corridors — cleaned and tested. The E.P.A. is accepting requests until Sept. 3.

The E.P.A.'s May announcement of an asbestos cleanup program was an abrupt reversal of the federal government's earlier stance that cleanups of private indoor spaces were the responsibility of residents and landlords. Tenants' groups and politicians had demanded that the E.P.A. and other federal agencies take on the job. But now that it has, only a relatively few residents in the approximately 20,000 eligible apartments have asked for the work.

The reasons for refusing run the "whole gamut," the agency official said. "Some say, 'It's very clean, I know it is,'" she said. "Others don't trust the government to be inside their homes."

The agency says ordinary home cleaning cannot remove asbestos, toxic metals or dioxins. Specialized cleaning agents and vacuums are required. Crevices or wider areas with thick coatings of dust will be isolated with plastic shields and samples taken for testing. Particularly dusty apartments will be cordoned off and the residents moved out until the cleaning is completed. Afterward, the air will be tested.