

Avaltroni, Robert

From: Avaltroni, Robert
Sent: Friday, November 01, 2002 10:48 AM
To: Maldonado, Jane
Subject: FW: DEP Cleanup Story for Updating and Review

-----Original Message-----

From: Hotz, Jonathan [mailto:Jonathan.Hotz@edelman.com]
Sent: Friday, November 01, 2002 10:25 AM
To: Bob Avaltroni (E-mail)
Cc: 'Theodorellys, Penny'
Subject: DEP Cleanup Story for Updating and Review

Bob,

This has been a long time in coming -- my apologies -- but here's the story. It obviously needs some updating to be made current, some facts need to be checked and confirmed, your quotes need to be approved and additional information is needed. Specifically:

- Length of the project from initial inspection to final cleaning to final inspections of independently cleaned buildings
- Project's inception, i.e., when preliminary inspections were made
- Dates when full inspection of downtown buildings were conducted
- Number of buildings cleaned by building owners using independent contractors
- Date when DEP cleanup officially concluded
- Update on number of buildings cleaned by DEP and total number of square footage
- Number of buildings outstanding and when inspections will be made (if they have not already) and consequences to building owners who fail to comply.
- Your exact title
- Also brief explanation for whatever discrepancy still remains in the numbers

NOTE: These questions are also highlighted in blue in the attached copy.

We have several nice photos to accompany the story, some we have taken and some you were good enough to provide. We have a nice shot showing the care with which the DEP moved cars (shows two tow trucks lifting car) which will accompany the final piece of the story.

Thanks again for your help, Bob. Much appreciated.

Jon

<<NYC DEP Completes Downtown Cleanup.doc>>

11/29/02

NYC DEP Completes Downtown Cleanup

In October [DATE], the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) officially wrapped up a five-month [CHECK] effort to remove potentially hazardous dust and debris that had accumulated on the roofs, windows and facades of downtown buildings following the World Trade Center (WTC) collapse. The project was both a feat of labor and logistics with DEP crews working around the clock and making every accommodation possible to minimize the disruption to area residents, businesses and institutions as they cleaned more than 1.8 million [CONFIRM] square feet of exterior building space.

Beginning last winter [MONTH?], the DEP set about inspecting buildings in the area for exterior residue containing more than 1 percent of asbestos, the threshold amount set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Labor, New York State and the DEP. In tests conducted on a small sample of downtown buildings in close proximity to the WTC site, 40 percent tested positive for asbestos contamination, prompting the DEP to commence a comprehensive inspection of the more than one thousand buildings in the area.

“There was a great degree of anxiety among people in Lower Manhattan,” said Robert Avaltroni, deputy commissioner of the DEP. “We felt that we needed to act quickly to relieve that anxiety in order to help people who live and work in the area move forward with their lives.”

When the full inspection was complete, the DEP found the problem to be somewhat smaller than preliminary tests had suggested. Of the 1,072 buildings the DEP inspected, 315 – less than 30 percent – tested positive for asbestos contamination and were earmarked for cleaning.

The DEP conducted outreach to the owners of the affected buildings to notify them of the need for cleanup, giving them the option to have the work done by the DEP or through an independent contractor of their own choosing. The owners of 95 buildings elected to have their buildings cleaned independently. The DEP later re-inspected these buildings and certified that all asbestos-containing material had been removed.

DEP cleanup crews went into action beginning June 3 and worked 24 hours a day, seven days a week with the exception of holidays and days when inclement weather made cleaning unsafe. When the cleanup concluded on October [DATE], DEP contractors had cleaned 136 [UPDATE NUMBER] buildings totaling 1,8XX,XXX square feet of building space. DEP crews used various means to reach building surfaces, including cherry pickers, scaffolds and platforms, and cleaned these surfaces using high-pressure spray-guns as well as by hand.

“We went into every crevice and every corner of the buildings we cleaned,” said Avaltroni. “Wherever we saw debris, we removed it.”

Liz Berger, a long-time resident and employee in the area, is very appreciative of the effort put forth by the City and the DEP. “The City and the DEP were genuinely interested in understanding the issue and solving the problem,” said Berger. “Thanks to their efforts, I feel much better in the apartment where I live and in the building where I work.”

The owners of the XX [NEED FIGURE] buildings that remain have failed to respond to the DEP's repeated attempts to reach them. These buildings will be re-inspected in the coming weeks. Those that fail DEP inspection will be subject to [WHAT ACTION WILL BE TAKEN?].

**A Day in the Life of a DEP Cleaning Crew:
Juggling Schedules and Moving Automobiles**

While DEP crews tended to the cleanup in expeditious fashion, they also went to great lengths to ensure that downtown life went undisturbed as they went about their work. "We took into consideration the patterns of everyday life downtown," said Avaltroni. "As hard as we worked to clean up the area, we strove equally hard to minimize any disruption to residents, businesses and institutions."

Doing so required some logistical feats on the part of the DEP. In certain cases, building cleanups had to be scheduled at off-hours. For example, the cleanup at St. Peter's Church at 16 Barclay Street could only be conducted on weeknights from 6 pm to midnight so as not to impede parishioners from entering the church or disturb church services.

In addition to juggling schedules, the DEP became quite adept at moving automobiles parked in front of buildings marked for cleaning despite posted notices. In several cases, the DEP deployed teams of tow trucks to lift cars gingerly from front and back -- so as not to damage them -- move them away from the cleanup site and then return them once cleanup was completed. In one case where a car could not be moved without risk of damage, DEP crews wrapped the entire vehicle in plastic to protect it.

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

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