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Sent: Friday, May 17, 2002 11:12 AM
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Subject: World Trade Center Indoor Air conference call



WTCcleanRELEASE.
 wpd

Hello,

This is the following information for the World Trade Center Indoor Air conference call on Tuesday, May 21, 2002.
 Call in time...11am - 1pm, call in number...202-260-1015... Access number 4061.

For those who will be attending the meeting it will be held in the director's office on the 25th floor.

Below is the press release for your information.

.(See attached file: WTCcleanRELEASE.wpd)

Thanks

Towana



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency • Region 2

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EPA AND CITY OUTLINE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO ADDRESS THE CONCERNS OF LOWER MANHATTAN RESIDENTS ABOUT THE IMPACTS OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTER COLLAPSE ON INDOOR AIR QUALITY

FOR RELEASE: May 8, 2002

(#02038) New York, New York – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and its federal, state and city partners today announced a comprehensive plan to ensure that apartments impacted by the collapse of the World Trade Center have been properly cleaned. The plan -- covering residential units south of Canal Street and the Manhattan Bridge approach, river to river -- was developed by the multi-agency Task Force on Indoor Air in Lower Manhattan created by EPA Administrator Christie Whitman. All levels of government have come together in this unprecedented effort to provide assurances that people are not being exposed to pollutants related to the World Trade Center collapse at levels that might pose long-term health risks.

EPA, New York State, New York City, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) are taking a collaborative approach that will include the:

- cleanups of residential units on request, using certified contractors, with followup testing for asbestos in the indoor air;
- testing-only for asbestos in the indoor air for requesting households;
- establishment of a hotline to take cleanup and testing requests;
- availability of HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filter vacuums;
- distribution of health and cleanup information; and
- professional cleanups of remaining unoccupied, uncleaned buildings.

“We understand the concerns of Lower Manhattan residents and we know that they are looking to us for reassurance,” said Jane M. Kenny, EPA Regional Administrator. “While we cannot undo the events of September 11, we can provide the assurance that people's homes have been cleaned properly. While the scientific data about any immediate health risks from indoor air is reassuring, people should not have to live with uncertainty about their futures.”

"As New Yorkers rebound from 9/11, Mayor Bloomberg is committed to ensuring that the health and safety of residents and workers is of the highest priority," said Christopher Ward, DEP Commissioner. "While earlier air testing in Downtown Manhattan reassured New Yorkers, this comprehensive, collaborative program will allow residents to have their apartments cleaned and tested free of charge if there is any concern with indoor air quality. New Yorkers deserve to know that their environment is safe from health risks."

Under the plan outlined today, FEMA will provide a grant to New York City that will pay for the professional cleaning and testing.

"FEMA strongly supports the EPA and New York City's efforts to take immediate action aimed at alleviating concerns over environmental conditions in Lower Manhattan," said Joseph F. Picciano, Acting Regional Director of the FEMA Region, "We are pleased to be able to fully fund this initiative."

Under the plan outlined today, FEMA will provide funds to hire certified cleanup contractors for residents who wish to have their homes professionally cleaned. EPA will conduct followup testing for asbestos in the indoor air after the cleanups are completed. Upon request, the Agency will provide the option of testing-only for residents who do not want their apartments cleaned. New York State will continue to provide HEPA vacuums through FEMA to residents who wish to do their own cleaning on an ongoing basis. Requests for testing or cleaning will be taken through an EPA hotline that will be set up within several weeks.

EPA will collect samples of some pollutants associated with the collapse of the World Trade Center in apartments that have not been impacted. The Agency will use the data to determine pre-existing or "background" levels in interior spaces in New York City. The Agency is also preparing to test various cleanup techniques in a still-unoccupied building near the World Trade Center site to confirm their effectiveness. EPA will provide health and cleanup information to all residents through the hotline and on the Agency Web site (www.epa.gov/wtc).

Also under today's plan, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will supervise the cleaning of a small group of heavily impacted buildings that have remained unoccupied since September 11. Some of these buildings have not been cleaned thoroughly; most have not been cleaned at all. Worker safety during this cleanup will be coordinated with OSHA. In addition, DEP has begun contacting building owners to initiate the cleanup of residual debris on rooftops and building facades in Lower Manhattan. Finally, the city is developing a database of the results of samples taken indoors and outdoors by federal, state and local agencies as well as building owners and contractors.

"As the recovery process continues at Ground Zero, New Yorkers are still feeling the effects of the September 11th terrorist attacks," said Senator Charles Schumer. "We feel it when we look at an altered sky line; we feel it when we realize our neighbors aren't returning home and we feel it in the air

everyday, literally. The September 11th attacks produced genuine concerns about air quality in lower Manhattan and that's why the EPA's task force to ensure that our homes are safe is so necessary."

"Today's announcement is a welcome step forward, and if properly carried out, it can help residents of lower Manhattan breath easier at home, in school or at work," said Senator Hillary Clinton. "I look forward to working closely with the City, EPA and FEMA to ensure that the program is implemented quickly and effectively so that the public can be assured that their environment is healthy and safe. People deserve to know that the air they breathe is safe -- indoors and out. That's why I held a hearing on the subject in February. I am pleased that the task force for indoor air quality which I called for at that hearing has become a reality."

"I am pleased that the EPA is responding to our concerns, because addressing these issues is vital to the well-being, stability and resurgence of the residential and business community here," said Sheldon Silver, Speaker of the New York State Assembly.

"This is a huge task," added Ms. Kenny, "But I can assure you that we will not consider our job complete until residents and the business community of Lower Manhattan have regained a sense of comfort in the place that they call home."

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