

5/14/02
wtc
chronology

Department of Environmental Protection's WTC Chronological History

- Initial response to Ground Zero by the Division of Emergency Response and Technical Assessment (Hazmat).
- DEP Hazmat took over first response activities in conjunction with the Fire Department who lost a significant number of Hazmat employees responding to the incident.
- DEP Hazmat performed entries into ground zero and beneath the World Trade Center. These confined space entries involved performing monitoring and assessment of atmospheric conditions at subsurface levels.
- On September 12, DEP began operating a network of outdoor (or "ambient") fixed air monitors that have been used to date for monitoring asbestos levels. Air sampling activities included the outer boroughs through 10/12/01, and included in front of four schools in the vicinity of the WTC site.
- DEP worked daily with EPA, NYSDOH, NYSDEC and its sister agencies with respect to the clean-up activities and results of air sampling in and around ground zero.
- DEP established a 12-hour hotline on 9/12/01 to provide assistance to building owners, tenants, contractors, and consultants, through 11/12/01.
- DEP conducted site inspections and distributed clean-up protocols to building owners through October 2001.
- To date, DEP has conducted exterior inspections of almost 1,000 buildings, river to river, North to Reade Street.
- As a result of complaints received by the agency, DEP has responded to 174 locations. In only one instance, has DEP ordered an asbestos abatement clean-up.
- To date, we have received over 120,000 indoor air samples from building owners in the affected area. Only 197 samples have been above the TEM level of 70s/mm².
- In early April after numerous public hearings, including the February 11th hearing conducted by Senators Clinton and Lieberman, Commissioner Ward commenced negotiations with EPA to begin to formulate a comprehensive plan that would restore public confidence in Lower Manhattan.
- On Wednesday, May 14, 2002, EPA took the lead at a press conference to announce a comprehensive program developed with DEP and FEMA.

- The key components of the comprehensive plan to be instituted on 6/3/02 are as follows:

Short term

- EPA is lead Agency
- Establishment of an EPA hotline
- Direct assistance to residents and residential building owners (clean-up and testing of apartments, as requested)
- Cleaning of unoccupied, uncleaned buildings. Six (6) as of this writing
- Clean-up of exterior buildings with residual WTC debris
- Professional review of HVAC systems as requested
- Distribution upon request, of HEPA Vacs through FEMA

Long term

- Pilot building cleaning to assess cleaning techniques
- Create a database on private sector environmental testing results and clean-up activity
- Background study of levels of potential contaminants
- DEP developed Scopes of Work for the hotline and clean-up activities, in conjunction with EPA, and is in the process of procuring the contracts to be managed by EPA.
- DEP will be setting up meetings with local elected officials and groups prior to the commencement of the program. These meetings will be led by EPA.
- A major symposium is being set up by DEP to be held at Pace University prior to the commencement of the program. This symposium will be led by EPA.