

DEP highlights
5/20/02

Department of Environmental Protection

- EPA has taken the lead in announcing a comprehensive program developed with DEP and FEMA to restore public confidence in Lower Manhattan. DEP (Commissioner Ward) commenced the negotiations that resulted in the comprehensive plan.
- The key components of the comprehensive plan to be instituted are as follows:

Downtown

- Establishment of an EPA hotline
- Direct assistance to residents and residential building owners (clean up and testing of apartments, as requested)
- Professional review of HVAC systems as requested
- Distribution upon request, of HEPA Vacs through FEMA

Buildings (DEP's Responsibility)

- Cleaning of unoccupied, uncleaned buildings.
- Clean-up of building exteriors with residual WTC debris

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
- Air Monitors – Since September 12, DEP has been operating a network of 24 outdoor fixed air monitors. The results of which are posted on DEP's website.
- To date, DEP has received over 120,000 indoor air samples from building owners in the affected area. Of the samples provided, less than 1% were above re-occupancy standards for asbestos and, in all these cases, a proper cleanup was conducted.
- To date, DEP has conducted exterior inspections of almost 1,000 buildings, river to river, North to Worth Street. Buildings identified with WTC debris on the facades/roofs will be cleaned by licensed asbestos contractors and monitored by DEP.
- As a result of complaints received by the agency, DEP has responded to more than 200 locations. In only one instance, has DEP ordered an asbestos abatement clean up.