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Sent: Monday, March 25, 2002 10:23 AM
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Subject: Q and A to be sent out for Dore

— Forwarded by Nancy Maltais/R2/USEPA/US on 03/25/02 10:21 AM —

Dore LaPosta

To: Nancy Maltais/R2/USEPA/US@EPA
cc:
Subject: Q and A to be sent out for Dore

Please send this out as per our conversation,
 (See attached file: wtcqas3 25.wpd)
 Dore LaPosta
 732 321-6686 phone
 732 321-6616 fax



wtcqas3 25.wpd

laposta.dore@epa.gov

Questions and Answers
March 25, 10:00am

Category: testing for better cleaning methods

Q. Does the fact that you are doing a pilot cleaning project to assess cleaning methods mean that you don't think the advice given to apartment owners is sound?

EPA believes that the advice given to apartment owners is sound. In certain situations, where apartments were not very dusty, wet mops and HEPA vacs are good ways to get rid of the dust without allowing it to become airborne. For apartments with significant dust, EPA and NYCDEP recommended professional cleaning, which would also mean methods designed to prevent the dust from getting airborne. Because some residents have expressed concern about the cleanup methods recommended by the city, EPA is doing this assessment to confirm the effectiveness of the cleaning methods and, if necessary to make improvements or clarifications to existing recommendations.

Q. What cleaning methods will you try?

A. We will clean using a variety of methods, ranging from wet mops and HEPA vacs to professional level asbestos abatements. We will also test upholstery, furniture and carpets to see what cleaning techniques work on these items.

Q. Why is EPA cleaning an unoccupied building, and not a building where people are living and might be at risk?

A. EPA will chose a building that is unoccupied and has not been disturbed since September 11 because such a building will have the same conditions as many buildings did when they were initally cleaned. By using an undisturbed building, EPA can thoroughly test a number of cleaning techniques and compare their effectiveness in a worst case scenarios.

Q. Have you chosen the building?

No. The city will provide EPA with a list of residential buildings that have not been cleaned or re-occupied since Sept. 11. The list of options is likely to be very small. Access, structural integrity, and proximity to the WTC site will be considered.

Q. When will you begin cleaning?

FEMA is working closely with the city to get the funding necessary to do the cleaning. Once the funding is in place, EPA can begin the field work.

Q. How can I volunteer my apartment to be tested?

A. The New York City's special hotline (212-221-8635) will take your requests.



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Q. How do we know that what was found on the pile isn't in my apartment?

A. The dust in your apartment is similar to the dust found around the site of the World Trade Center. As EPA has stated, this dust has been found to contain asbestos, and it should be either professionally cleaned up or handled very carefully, depending on the volume of the dust in your apartment. When the buildings collapsed, they projected an enormous amount of dust and debris into the lower Manhattan area. It is likely that some dust entered most apartments within the proximity of the WTC site.

Q. How much will it cost to clean my apartment?

A. There is still uncertainty about the cost per apartment for sampling, cleaning and post-cleaning testing. **(THIS ANSWER SEEMS INCOMPLETE – CAN FEMA HELP PAY FOR SOME CLEANUPS? HEPA VACS? Can we say that “FEMA and other relief agencies have been providing assistance in acquiring equipment if you wish to clean your own apartment and in paying some re-location costs or cleanup costs (??) if you chose professional cleaning”?)**

Q. Why are you cleaning only one building when Sen. Clinton/Rep. Nadler asked you to clean 10,000 apartments?

A. EPA's and NYC's task forces are exploring if additional cleaning recommendations need to be provided to occupied buildings and if additional testing or cleaning may be needed in some apartments. The information we gather from cleaning an unoccupied building, along with information from a NYC DOH and ATSDR indoor air study and more than 100,000 samples taken by private contractors inside buildings in lower Manhattan, will be used to determine what followup actions may be needed in some apartments.

Category: current risks – what we know so far..

Q. Did EPA give bad guidance on indoor air?

A. EPA gave good guidance on air quality based sampling data. We acknowledged some risk, especially to workers on the pile who were directly exposed to smoke and were working in the dust. For area residents and workers we said that there did not appear to be a long term risk based on the levels of pollutants we were finding. This has been born out by not only our sampling – more than 15,000 samples so far – but also extensive sampling from the NYCDEP, OSHA, and others.

Q. How can I know what risk I or my family faces?

A. We're evaluating what information we have. Given the tens of thousands of samples that have been taken by EPA and others, EPA does not anticipate any increased risk from exposure to WTC material for residents and office workers from the ambient air. We do know that the dust contains some asbestos, and we have removed the vast majority of dust from the outside -



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vacuuming streets and parks and washing buildings. Removing the dust from within your apartment and from your building will reduce any risk that may exist from the indoor apartment. For the short term, we know people have experienced irritation from the WTC dust material.

Q. What are the chemicals of concern?

A. The principal concern has been asbestos, but EPA has tested for many other chemicals that were associated with the fires and with the materials we know to have been in the WTC buildings. We did not find detectable levels of many of these chemicals and for still more any levels we found were below benchmarks set by our risk assessors and public health experts. A few compounds, such as asbestos and fibrous glass along with some possible others, may still be of concern in some indoor areas.

Q. Am I at risk from mercury poisoning? A. No.

Q. Am I at risk from lead poisoning? A. No.

Q. Are levels found at school dangerous to my children?

A. According to samples taken by the Board of Education and by a private contractor, the air in downtown schools does not contain dangerous levels of pollutants. Some reported lead samples did exceed federal standards, but those levels might be related to levels commonly found in New York City. For more information, go to NYCDEP's web site – which contains all the school sampling results. You can also call the NYC Hotline.

Q. Am I at risk for asbestos disease (or sickness from glass fibers)?

A. In the long term - we do not anticipate any increased risk from exposure to WTC material for residents and office workers from the ambient air. Removing the dust from within your apartment and from your building will reduce any risk that may exist from the indoor apartment. We have continuously informed workers at the WTC site to wear respiratory protection to reduce their risks of exposure to contaminants from the site. In the short term - individuals have experienced irritation and a worsening of existing respiratory conditions due to the WTC dust.

Q. Critics like Cate Jenkins say the 1% standard isn't safe enough, will critics' comments change the standard to something else?

A. The 1% is a regulatory standard for determining if a substance is asbestos containing material. We cleaned everything up regardless of the % of asbestos in the dust. We also advised the public to just assume that the dust contained asbestos. We only used the 1% to characterize the dust and get a sense of its content.

Category – long term health effects

Q. Will you track health effects?



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A: If you'd like to participate in a health registry call the NYC Hotline (212-221-8635) - they are taking information for a future registry.

Category: studies (UC-Davis, ATSDR)

Q. Why did EPA not test for ultrafine particles, as were tested for in the UC Davis study?

EPA has been studying ultrafines over the past several years and there is not any scientific evidence that links these ultra-fine particles – less than 1 micron in diameter – with health effects. EPA continues to look at these particles and the additional information provided by the UC Davis study will contribute to the growing body of knowledge about ultrafines.

Q. What additional work will be done on the ATSDR/DOH study? Will more apartments be tested or will you retest the ones you already tested?

A. In addition, New York City Department of Health (NYCDOH), Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and EPA are planning to build on the indoor air study conducted in November and December 2001. This may include followup monitoring or recommendations for further cleaning.

Category: database

Q. What is the status of the database? Have you seen any trends yet? What sub-populations are you looking at e.g., workers in the building at the time of the impacts, cleanup workers, children living in the area?

A. EPA has developed a database that houses data from all agencies and are in the process of making this system available to the public (ARE WE?). EPA data can be obtained from our website and other agencies also have their data posted on their web sites. From our review of the data, in the long term - EPA does not anticipate any increased risk from exposure to WTC material for residents and office workers from the ambient air. Removing the dust from within your apartment and from your building will reduce any risk that may exist from the indoor apartment. We have continuously informed workers at the WTC site to wear respiratory protection to reduce their risks of exposure to contaminants from the site. In the short term - individuals have experienced irritation and a worsening of existing respiratory conditions due to the WTC dust.

Q. Who can explain what the data means?

A. EPA has professional staffers who can explain the data. If you call our Asbestos hotline or the Superfund ombudsman in Region 2, your questions can be answered. (Do we want to send people to the asbestos hotline – do they know about WTC?)

Category: miscellaneous



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Q. What if my landlord won't clean my apartment?

A. Call the City's hotline and explain the situation.

Q. Who will clean the facades and rooftops?

A. NYCDEP will remove the residual debris from rooftops and facades.

Q. How many buildings will be "cleaned" of roof/facade debris?

A. The City has been studying the Lower Manhattan area; we do not yet know the perimeter of the area. The City will announce that information.

For Jane only - We have some maps indicating area probably will be south of Chambers and Frankfort Streets to Battery Park and Beaver Street, and west of Pearl Street to the Hudson River.

Q. What will is cost and when will it be done?

A. FEMA has committed \$10 million for the cleaning project for facades and rooftops. The City has not yet announced when this cleanup begins.



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