NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

No Potential for asbestos hazard

Dear Resident,
Address

The New York City Department of Health, with the assistance of the U.S. Public Health Service the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), conducted environmental sampling in your building on *_date_*. This sampling was conducted to determine the potential for environmental exposures to materials from the World Trade Center collapse and possible health implications of the exposures. The specific focus of the sampling was to characterize the make-up and size ranges of settled dust and airborne dust in residential areas - both indoors and outside - near the World Trade Center site.

Up to four areas of your building were sampled, outside -------, the hallway -------, and two residences. At each location one dust sample and one air sampled were collected, unless otherwise noted. Although the samples were analyzed for asbestos, dust, fibers, silica and other minerals, only the results from the asbestos portion of the samples are available at this time. This letter only conveys and explains the findings of the asbestos and fiber analyses.

Neither the dust outside of your building, collected by scraping the sidewalk, nor the dust inside of your building, collected by vacuuming, contained any asbestos fibers. The vacuum sample was collected from a large section of open floor, and gathered many types of materials that are normally present in household dust such as: dirt from outdoors, hair, skin cells, and fibrous materials. All dust samples were analyzed by two laboratory methods to confirm no asbestos fibers were present (polarized light microscopy and transmission electron microscope). The laboratory methods were able to identify and quantify the fibrous material components. The attached summary shows these results and identifies the other types of fibers that were found in your home: wool, fiberglass, synthetics, and cellulose. Cellulose, may come from paper, cardboard or other wood based products in your home. Fabrics and textiles in your home may have natural (i.e. wool fibers) or synthetic fibers which may be present in the dust of your home. The presence of these materials in the dust sample is expected and does not indicate a hazard. Fiberglass is further addressed below.

The air samples, collected for over a 4 hour period in your building, did not indicate any fibers as analyzed by Phased Contrast Microscopy (PCM). ***{or}*** The air samples, collected for over a 4 hour period in your building, did indicate low levels of fibers in the air of your building as analyzed by Phased Contrast Microscopy (PCM). Since PCM cannot distinguish the fiber material, this result of __ fibers per cubic centimeter (f/cc) of air may include fabric fibers, cellulose or fiberglass, which are not as hazardous of asbestos. However, even if all of the fibers seen were asbestos, the level of fibers in your home are well within the U.S. and NYC re-occupancy standard for asbestos in community and residential buildings of 0.01 fibers/cubic centimeter (f/cc) in indoor air. Additionally, since no asbestos was seen in the dust of your home, it is less likely that any of these fibers were asbestos.

In addition to samples taken in your home, we also sampled buildings located above 59th Street

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in Manhattan, which we feel were far enough away that they were not impacted by the dust from the World Trade Center collapse. We took these additional samples to see what would be found in a typical living space in Manhattan. None of these comparison areas had asbestos in the dust, by either laboratory method. However, as with your home, low levels of fibers were seen in the air, from less than 0.001 f/cc to 0.003 f/cc. This indicates the asbestos sampling from your building is similar to that seen in areas not impacted by the dust from the collapse.

Based on the above findings, we believe there is no hazard from asbestos in your home. There is no need for further cleaning or environmental testing based on these asbestos results.

Fiberglass is a common insulation material and may be present in your building if fiberglass insulation has been installed. Fiberglass materials were also in the World Trade Center and may be a component of any dust or debris remaining from the WTC collapse. If fiberglass was in the dust sample of your home, we cannot determine if it is there due to the WTC collapse of if there is another source in your building. No fiberglass fibers were found in the comparison buildings we sampled north of 59th Street. Fiberglass may be irritating to the skin and upper respiratory tract if inhaled. *(Building specific Recommendation ? ? 0% - 50% inside (5-25% for most), a high of 72% fiberglass in one outside sample - but no dust loading information except for qualitative on the survey form)*

Since work continues at the World trade Center site, dust can still be a concern for some residents. Dust from outdoors can be carried home on your shoes so remove them before going inside or wet wipe them. Regular, routine cleaning is important to keep dust levels low in downtown homes. Proper dust cleanup will prevent dust from getting in the air again. The best way to remove dust from surfaces is to use a wet rag or wet mop (wet wiping). Sweeping the dust dry may cause it to get in the air you breathe. Use a high efficiency vacuum cleaner (HEPA) to clean dust from carpets, upholstery, and other materials that cannot be cleaned by wet wiping.

Other dust and air samples were taken in your home to check for particles of various sizes, silica and other minerals. We have not yet received those results from the laboratory. We will forward those results to you as they become available.

Thank you for allowing us into your home to conduct this sampling. Your participation is allowing us to answer public health questions important to all of the residents of lower Manhattan. Please give us a call if you have any questions regarding these results.

Sincerely,

Atch:

Results with explanation
Asbestos Fact Sheet

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Summary of Asbestos Sampling Results

Address: Building 20's address
Date sampled: Nov 27, 2001

Dust samples

Fibrous materials in dust found by Polarized Light Microscopy (PLM) Analysis: Polarized Light Microscopy identifies asbestos fibers by shape and optical characteristics. Other fibers such as fabric (synthetics), paper (cellulose) and fiberglass may be identified in the analysis. The laboratory analyst will count the fibers present to give an estimate of fiber content as a percent.

Area Sampled	Outside	Hallway	Residence 1	Residence 2
Sample Numbers	No Sample	VA-C-20	VA-R1-20	VA-R2-20
Asbestos present in dust: Chrysotile asbestos	No Dust Available	None	None	None
Other fibers present: Glass Cellulose Synthetic	No Dust Available	20% 20%	20% 20%	20% 20%
Non-fibrous Materials: Other		60%	60%	60%

Asbestos in dust as determined by Transmission Electron Microscope (TEM) Analysis: TEM analysis was conducted on all dust samples which showed asbestos content by PLM as less than 1%. TEM analysis is very specific, can detect smaller fiberss of asbestos and is sensitive to fewer interferences. This analysis was done to confirm the PLM findings of no asbestos shown above.

Area Sampled	Outside	Common	Residence 1	Residence 2
Sample Numbers	No Sample	VA-C-20	VA-R1-20	VA-R2-20
Asbestos present in dust Chrysotile	No Dust Available	None	None	None

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Summary of Asbestos Sampling Results

Address: Building 20's address
Date sampled: Nov 27, 2001

Air samples

Airborne fibers as determined by Phased Contrast Microscopy (PCM): An air sample is collected by pulling air through a filter. The filter catches fibers an is sent to a laboratory to determine what types of fibers were in the air. Phase contrast microscopy identifies fibers based on size and shape, but not mineral composition. Therefore, the fibers seen by PCM include asbestos fibers as well as other fibers, such as textiles, fiberglass, cellulose, which might be present in your home. By counting all fibers, we are being more protective of your health when we compare this to our screening value for asbestos fibers.

Area Sampled	Outside	Common	Residence 1	Residence 2
Sample Numbers	A-O-20 A-O-X-20*	A-C-20	A-R1-20	A-R2-20
Concentration of Fibers in Air at this location	<.001 <.001*	<.001	<.001	<.001
Concentration of Fibers in Air at background locations	<.001 to .001	<.001 to .002	<.001 to .002	<.001 to .002
Screening Value	.01 f/cc	.01 f/cc	.01 f/cc	.01 f/cc

*Denotes co-located, 2nd sample

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