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Daily Environmental Monitoring Summary

Saturday-Tuesday, February 16-19, 2002

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other federal, state and local agencies have collected extensive environmental monitoring data from the World Trade Center site and nearby areas in Manhattan, Brooklyn and New Jersey. Since September 11, EPA has taken samples of the air, dust, water, river sediments and drinking water and analyzed them for the presence of pollutants that might pose a health risk to response workers at the World Trade Center site and the public. The samples are evaluated against a variety of benchmarks, standards and guidelines established to protect public health under various conditions. EPA is collecting data from more than 20 fixed air monitors in and around ground zero and additional monitors in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. The Agency is also using portable sampling equipment to collect data from a range of locations.

Results as of 4:30 p.m. on 2/19

Air: Fixed Monitors in New York:
Asbestos - EPA analyzed 18 samples taken in and around ground zero on February 12. All one samples showed results less than 70 structures per square millimeter, which is the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) standard for allowing children to re-enter school buildings after asbestos removal activities.

This brings the total number of air samples collected and analyzed for lower Manhattan to 6,049, with 17 samples above the standard (11 of these were collected prior to September 30; the other six were collected on October 9, November 27, December 27, January 14, February 5 and February 11).

This number of exceedances is lower than reported on prior daily summaries. Earlier sampling results included an additional, unnecessary adjustment for the volume of air sampled. Using a more appropriate method, those results have been recalculated and the true levels of asbestos measured are generally lower. Consequently, the standard was actually exceeded less often than previously stated.

Staten Island Landfill:
Air (Particulates) - EPA used portable monitors to collect samples of particulates on February 14 at the Staten Island Landfill. There were no significant readings.

Ambient Air Samples:
Particulate Monitoring - EPA used portable monitors to collect samples on February 15 and February 18 at Location "L" (northeast side of Stuyvesant High School); Location "N" (south side of Pier 25); and Location "R" (northwest side of Stuyvesant High School). Samples were also collected on February 16 at Location "L" and Location "R." All readings were below the OSHA time-weighted permissible exposure limit for particulates.

VOCs - Sampling for volatile organic compounds (VOCs) was conducted from

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February 14 through February 18 in the direct area of the debris pile at ground zero. To protect workers at the work site, EPA takes grab samples of VOCs where smoke plumes have been sighted. The results are snapshots of the levels at a moment in time. OSHA's protective standards set a permissible exposure limit (PEL) averaged over an 8-hour day.

All samples taken from February 14 through February 18 at EPA's Wash Tent (West & Murray Streets), Austin Tobin Plaza, the South Tower debris pile, and the North Tower debris pile either showed no detectable levels of VOC's, or the levels of VOC's did not exceed OSHA standards.

Previous Daily Environmental Monitoring Summaries:

February 15, 2002
February 14, 2002
February 13, 2002
February 12, 2002
February 9-11, 2002
February 8, 2002
February 7, 2002
February 6, 2002
February 5, 2002
February 2-4, 2002
February 1, 2002
January 31, 2002
January 30, 2002
January 29, 2002
January 26-28, 2002
January 25, 2002
January 24, 2002
January 23, 2002
January 22, 2002
January 19-21, 2002
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January 16, 2002
January 15, 2002
January 12-14, 2002
January 11, 2002
January 10, 2002
January 9, 2002
January 8, 2002
January 5-7, 2002
January 4, 2002
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January 1 & 2, 2002
December 29-31, 2001
December 28, 2001
December 22 - 27, 2001
December 21, 2001
December 20, 2001
December 19, 2001
December 18, 2001
December 16 & 17, 2001
December 15, 2001
December 14, 2001
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December 12, 2001

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December 11, 2001
December 9 & 10, 2001
December 8, 2001
December 7, 2001
December 6, 2001
December 5, 2001
December 4, 2001
December 2 & 3, 2001
December 1, 2001
November 29 & 30, 2001
November 28, 2001
November 27, 2001
November 26, 2001
November 23, 2001
November 21, 2001
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November 16, 2001
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November 13, 2001
November 11 & 12, 2001
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November 7, 2001
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November 3, 2001
November 1 & 2, 2001
October 30 & 31, 2001
October 28 & 29, 2001
October 26 & 27, 2001
October 25, 2001
October 24, 2001
October 23, 2001
October 22, 2001
October 21, 2001
October 20, 2001
October 19, 2001
October 17 & 18, 2001
October 16, 2001
October 15, 2001
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October 11, 2001
October 10, 2001
October 9, 2001
October 8, 2001
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Data Through September 30

Resources on the World Wide Web:

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US Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration EXIT disclaimer
New York City Department of Health EXIT disclaimer
US Department of Health and Human Services EXIT disclaimer
New York State Emergency Management Office EXIT disclaimer

EPA information about the events of September 11

Last updated on Tuesday, February 19th, 2002
URL: http://www.epa.gov/epahome/wtc/data_summary.htm

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