



New York City Office of Emergency Management
Press Office: 718-422-4888

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**NYC OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROVIDES UPDATE ON CITY'S
RESPONSE TO 130 LIBERTY STREET FIRE**

AIR SAMPLING RESULTS TEST NEGATIVE FOR ASBESTOS – SAMPLING CONTINUES

NO BUILDING ACCESS RESTRICTIONS IN PLACE

The NYC Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is coordinating the City's response to the fire at 130 Liberty Street on Saturday, August 18, 2007. OEM, along with several City agencies, including the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit (CAU), the Fire Department (FDNY), the Police Department (NYPD) and the Departments of Environmental Protection (DEP), Buildings (DOB), Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and Sanitation (DSNY) are operating from the scene. They are joined by personnel from the American Red Cross.

While the cause of the fire has not yet been established, FDNY fire marshals are conducting an extensive investigation. The FDNY's safety division is investigating the deaths of two firefighters. FDNY personnel continue to extinguish small pockets of fire from within the building.

Air Quality Testing

Personnel from the Department of Environmental Protection immediately responded to the scene and instituted air quality testing to supplement testing that has been ongoing at the site during the deconstruction of 130 Liberty Street. Air monitoring is ongoing. To date, 57 samples from 22 locations – both immediately adjacent to 130 Liberty Street and from several locations on surrounding blocks – have tested negative for asbestos. 8 of the locations are from sampling stations set up as part of the deconstruction of 130 Liberty Street. 14 of the locations were added by DEP in the aftermath of the fire to test for asbestos. DEP will continue to do air sample testing from the scene.

The sampling stations set up as part of the 130 Liberty Street deconstruction project test for several contaminants and particulate matter. Samples from those stations will take several days to analyze. There are 12 sampling sites for this project in total; 4 of the stations remain inaccessible due to

firefighting operations. They will be analyzed as soon as it is safe to access the sampling sites. Information on air sampling related to the deconstruction of 130 Liberty Street is available at the website of the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center at: http://www.lowermanhattan.info/lmccc/programs/environmental/air_monitoring.aspx. Test results will be posted on www.lowermanhattan.info as they become available.

As expected from a large building fire, elevated levels of particulates were detected in the air during yesterday's fire. Those particulates decreased rapidly once the fire was controlled and are currently at normal levels.

Building Integrity

Inspectors and Forensic Engineers from the Department of Buildings began to inspect the structural integrity of the building as soon as the fire was brought under control. Although the building sustained damage consistent with a large fire, the structure of the building remains intact and DOB engineers have determined there is no risk of collapse. Engineers remain onsite to conduct further inspections.

DOB is inspecting the scaffolding repair work to 130 Liberty Street to determine what repair work needs to be performed. The private contractor for the building has indicated that repair work will take approximately three to four weeks.

Access Restrictions

West Street northbound has two lanes open in the area of the World Trade Center site to facilitate investigation and clean up work. West Street southbound, closed earlier as a result of the fire, has been reopened.

There is limited access to several streets and sidewalks adjacent to 130 Liberty Street due to damaged scaffolding and to accommodate personnel at the scene.

No buildings are closed as a result of the fire.

Mental Health

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene advises that the fire may trigger painful memories of September 11th among nearby workers and building residents. Some may feel confused or insecure, or suffer stress-related symptoms such as anger, headaches or nervousness. These symptoms normally ease within a few weeks. People whose symptoms persist for longer periods should consider seeking professional help. For resources and information on coping during times of trauma, please visit www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/mhdpr/mhdpr-fact.shtml

Updated information on the City's response, as well as air monitoring test results and roadway restrictions, is available at www.NYC.gov, or by calling 311 (TTY: 212-504-4115).

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