



NEW YORK CITY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Release # 02-010

Friday, April 19, 2002

OEM'S LOWER MANHATTAN AIR QUALITY HOTLINE HANDLES HUNDREDS OF CALLS TO DATE

Details of Efforts to Address Environmental Issues at Ground Zero

The Lower Manhattan Air Quality Hotline, maintained by the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM), fielded a total of 429* calls between March 11—its first day of operation—and April 18, 2002. The majority of calls involved environmental and indoor air quality issues, as well as inquiries on building cleanup and health concerns associated with the World Trade Center disaster and recovery effort.

“The Hotline is an unqualified success,” said Dr. James Miller of the New York City Department of Health (DOH), who oversees the Hotline. “Through one phone number, the City has been able to adequately address many concerns that residents and business owners may have about the air conditions in the vicinity of Ground Zero. The health and safety of those who live and work in Lower Manhattan has always been the City’s top priority, and this Hotline is just the latest effort we have undertaken to meet that goal.”

The Lower Manhattan Air Quality Hotline handles calls specific to air quality at and in the vicinity of Ground Zero. The Hotline is in operation Monday through Friday, between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. Representatives from the City’s Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Department of Health (DOH) field calls concerning indoor and outdoor air quality; and lead, mercury and asbestos levels at Ground Zero and the surrounding neighborhoods. The information collected is compiled into a tracking base for constituent complaints that can be used to identify those areas most in need of remediation.

Calls to the Hotline are handled in as timely and complete a manner as possible. For instance, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has responded to over sixty calls regarding indoor air quality: the agency has performed inspections of 53 residences and commercial buildings, observing no visible debris. Seven other cases are still being remediated.

The Lower Manhattan Air Quality Hotline can be reached at (212) 221-8635.

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The following table is a breakdown of the types of calls placed to the Hotline from March 11 to April 18, 2002:

Date	Cleaning	Environment	Health	Indoor Air	School	Specific Contaminants	Total
11-Mar	3	6	1	15	1	0	41
12-Mar	3	11	1	7	1	0	44
13-Mar	4	8	0	6	0	0	41
14-Mar	2	5	3	11	0	0	39
15-Mar	6	7	5	4	0	0	50
18-Mar	5	4	4	5	2	1	37
19-Mar	5	5	1	6	0	1	44
20-Mar	1	4	1	3	1	0	17
21-Mar	5	3	2	3	0	0	31
22-Mar	2	11	0	2	0	0	24
25-Mar	8	10	3	8	0	0	46
26-Mar	2	4	1	5	0	0	24
27-Mar	6	3	0	2	0	0	22
28-Mar	9	8	2	1	0	0	32
29-Mar	7	4	1	2	0	0	23
1-Apr	1	3	0	2	0	0	21
2-Apr	5	4	2	0	0	0	22
3-Apr	0	8	0	2	0	0	18
4-Apr	3	4	1	0	0	1	22
5-Apr	5	6	0	0	0	0	24
8-Apr	9	2	4	2	1	0	27
9-Apr	3	3	0	0	0	0	14
10-Apr	4	3	3	3	0	1	29
11-Apr	3	4	0	5	0	0	29
12-Apr	0	5	1	2	0	0	19
15-Apr	9	7	0	2	0	1	30
16-Apr	3	2	0	2	0	0	15
17-Apr	4	4	2	2	0	0	20
18-Apr	9	3	0	1	0	0	23
TOTAL	126	151	38	103	6	5	429

**An additional 399 calls unrelated to air quality issues, e.g. location of public viewing platforms, information on memorials services, etc.—along with hang-ups—are not included in this total.*