



NEW YORK CITY **OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**
Office of Public Information

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Update #2, 7/19/2007, 3:00 AM

UPDATE ON THE CITY'S RESPONSE TO THE STEAM PIPE EXPLOSION

The City's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) continues to coordinate the inter-agency response to the steam pipe explosion on Lexington Avenue. City agencies continue to operate in the area. All emergencies should be reported to 911.

The following is an update of the City's response to the affected area:

Frozen Zone Remains in Place

As announced by Mayor Bloomberg in his briefing, the area between 40th Street and 43rd Street and between Vanderbilt Avenue and Third Avenue remains a frozen zone pending an assessment of air and debris in the area. While individuals who are already in the frozen zone are permitted to stay where they are, individuals are not permitted to enter the zone from outside the area.

Members of the media are requested to emphasize to their viewers, listeners, or readers that people who work between 40th and 43rd Streets and between Vanderbilt Avenue to Third Avenue zone will not be permitted to enter the area on Thursday morning.

New Equipment Staging Area Established

OEM, the NYPD, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene have created a limited-access equipment staging area from 38th St to 45th St from Park Avenue to 3rd Avenue to allow emergency equipment into the area. While residents and employees of businesses will be allowed into the equipment staging area, vehicles will not be allowed to enter.

Department of Environmental Protection

Officials from the Department of Environmental Protection remain on scene and continue to await the results of tests to determine the air quality in the area and the contents of the debris from the explosion.

NYPD

As was announced before 7:00 PM, the NYPD determined that the cause of this explosion was not terrorism. Some 350 NYPD personnel responded to the incident. Three NYPD helicopters monitored the incident, including one with FD personnel on board providing live TV feeds to operations on the ground.



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Department of Buildings

Buildings inspectors and forensic engineers remain on the scene to assist the Office of Emergency Management with structural assessments and engineering expertise.

While small parts of the north and south crater walls are still in danger of collapse, Buildings forensic engineers have determined any further collapse would not jeopardize the structural stability of nearby buildings. After conducting an interior and exterior assessment, Buildings engineers and inspectors have determined the buildings bordering the crater are structurally sound.

The Buildings Department is requiring sidewalk sheds to be installed at some of the buildings along Lexington Avenue that sustained minor damage from the steam pipe explosion. As a safety precaution, the sidewalk sheds must be installed before the sidewalks are reopened to the public. The addresses of the buildings are 360 Lexington Avenue, 369 Lexington Avenue, 370 Lexington Avenue, and 380 Lexington Avenue.

Buildings forensic engineers have determined water collected in the basements of two nearby buildings will need to be removed. The addresses of these buildings are 369 Lexington Avenue and 375 Lexington Avenue.

Department of Transportation

The following streets in the area surrounding the steam pipe explosion remain closed, as previously announced:

- Lexington Avenue is closed from 57th Street to 34th Street.
- Third Avenue is closed from 38th Street to 42nd Street.
- Park Avenue is closed from 54th Street to 34th Street.
- 42nd Street is closed from Park Avenue to Third Avenue.
- Vanderbilt Avenue is closed for its entire length from 42nd Street to 47th Street.

MTA

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority has informed OEM that there are no structural defects or breaches of the subway infrastructure. In addition, no debris from the explosion was found in the subway tunnels in the area.

Metro-North continues to operate regular service into and out of Grand Central Terminal. As announced at the 8:00 briefing, customers may only enter and exit Grand Central via the Met Life Building and Grand Central North at 47th Street.



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The 4, 5 and 6 IRT lines have returned to a normal schedule, but service is bypassing Grand Central at reduced speed. The 7 line continues to bypass Grand Central at reduced speed. The 42nd Street Shuttle (S) remains suspended

Passengers on the 4 and 5 lines traveling southbound and headed to destinations near Grand Central are advised to, if possible, transfer to a downtown 6 train at the 59th/Lexington station for service to 51st Street or 33rd Street. Passengers on the 4 and 5 lines traveling northbound and headed to destinations near Grand Central are advised to, if possible, transfer to an uptown #6 train at 14th Street/Union Square station for service to 33rd Street.

Bus Service is re-routed in the vicinity of the area on the M101, M102, M103 and M98. The M104 and M42 buses terminate at Times Square/42nd Street.