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State and City to Begin Groundwater and Soil Remediation at West Side Corporation Site in Queens

DEC and DEP Mark the Start of Site Cleanup

Acting Commissioner David B. Tweedy of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Erin M. Crotty today announced the start of a complete environmental remediation, including the removal of the dry cleaning agent perchloroethylene from soil and groundwater, at the West Side Corporation (WSC) property, a Class 2 State Superfund site at 107-10 180 th Street in Jamaica.

Community leaders and local elected officials will join representatives from the DEP and the DEC on Monday, November 22 nd at 11:00 a.m. to mark the beginning of the project. The event will take place at 176 th Street and 109 th Avenue at a DEP facility adjacent to the site.

"This cleanup marks the culmination of almost a decade of work between DEC and DEP," Commissioner Crotty said. "Through our partnership and the strong support of Governor George E. Pataki, we have investigated the type and range of contamination at this site and developed plans for the site's cleanup. I look forward to a day when this site can be returned to productive, clean, and healthy reuse."

"This project will help us ensure a safe and dependable drinking water supply for the people of southeast Queens ," said DEP Acting Commissioner Tweedy. "It will also help to assure people in the community that Mayor Bloomberg and the governor are working to provide a healthy environment for them and their families."

Congressman Gregory W. Meeks said, "The cleanup of the West Side Corporation site is an example of how public policy is supposed to meet community needs. The NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection and the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation are working together the way government should to eliminate a hazard that has been a detriment to the local community. The involvement of federal funds through the Superfund program commits all three levels of government to the cleanup of this site. This

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groundbreaking is one more step in improving the functional relationship between the industrial and residential community, which has previously included the takeover of Jamaica Water Supply, the traffic plan in Addesleigh Park and the construction of 180 th Street between Liberty and 110 th."

State Senator Malcolm A. Smith said, "I would like to thank Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Commissioner Erin Crotty of the Department of Environmental Conservation and Former Commissioner Christopher O. Ward of the Department of Environmental Protection for their steadfast commitment to ensuring we have an environmentally safe neighborhood. Moreover, I am very excited about what the cleanup of the Westside Corporation Site will do for the health of the Southeast Queens Community. This is a groundbreaking day in the true sense of the words – one, the initial ceremonial groundbreaking to clean up the site, and two, the groundbreaking and purpose-driven formulation of the City and State team to carry out the clean up. This is a clear example of the maxim that when we all work together, the people of the City and State can benefit through our mutual cooperation. Lastly, with an eye towards the future, we must make sure the site becomes a viable asset to be redeveloped on behalf of the community."

City Councilmember Leroy G. Comrie Jr. said, "I am pleased that we have collaborated successfully, including all stakeholders, to insure that the residents involved are informed of all the issues surrounding this project."

Manuel Caughman, 1 st Vice-President of Queens Community Board #12 and Member of BQA Citizens Advisory Committee said, "This is a classic example of how state and city agencies, our elected officials and the community can work together to solve a problem that's beneficial to all concerned."

Linda Caleb Hazel, a member of BQA Citizens Advisory Committee, said, "It is wonderful to see the long-term concerns of the community regarding the cleanup of the Westside Corp. toxic site being met by state and city agencies. This important project will bring the highest quality of water to our southeast Queens community. It's been a long time coming, and I am so glad to be a part of this historic collaborative effort between the community and its government.

Irving Hicks, President of the Brinkerhoff Action Association, said, "This day many of us are celebrating the outcome of much effort from many contributors. We, the residents of the Brinkerhoff community, the direct benefactors of this massive project, extend our sincere thanks to all who have and are still contributing to this wonderful public service. The DEP made it very clear from the beginning that it was a community project and would be processed and implemented as directed by the residents and elected officials via the Citizens Advisory Committee. We also extend our appreciation for DEP's shouldering the burden of all expenses for the project and the many water and sewer service improvements during the past three years."

Clean-up of the WSC property is a primary focus of DEP's Brooklyn-Queens Aquifer (BQA) Study, a multi-phase project to investigate the use of groundwater from the aquifer beneath Brooklyn and Queens . DEP and DEC have worked together to ensure that the on-going BQA project is compatible with the clean-up of the WSC property. As part of the BQA project, the DEP is proposing to restart several groundwater production wells located near the WSC

property. Funding for the on-site remediation will initially come from the State Superfund program managed by DEC. This State funding will later be reimbursed by DEP. DEP will also undertake the bulk of the design and construction of the off-site groundwater remedy. The entire cost of the clean-up project will be approximately \$11 million, including \$3.85 million for on-site soil remediation and about \$6.5 million for the off-site groundwater remediation.

The WSC was a dry cleaning storage and distribution center that handled large amounts perchloroethylene (PCE) between 1969 and 1982. When the business closed it left behind a site contaminated by spills and storage tank leaks, which resulted in the seepage of PCE into the soil and groundwater.

The initial phase of the clean-up will focus on soil remediation and will use an innovative technique called Electrical Resistance Heating (ERH) to remediate the most contaminated portion of the site. The process involves treating the soil contamination in place and heating the subsurface soil with electrical current to extract, capture and then destroy vapors. Because it destroys the contamination on-site, it has the added benefit of minimizing the trucking of contaminated soils through the local community. This is the first time that the process will be used on a State Superfund project in New York State.

Upon completion of the ERH in summer 2005, soil vapor extraction will begin in areas with lesser contamination. This will be followed by remediation of groundwater by DEP, which also is expected to begin early next year.

A Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) composed of community activists and elected officials has played an important role in the overall study, and has provided valuable input and feedback on the WSC project. A Scientific Review Panel, selected by the CAC, has assisted the Committee in evaluating information related to remediation technologies.

The facility where Monday's kickoff event will be held is the DEP's Queens Repair Yard and includes a former Jamaica Water Supply groundwater well which was sealed by the company in 1982 because contamination from the WSC site had made the well unusable.

Design of the on-site cleanup was completed in June 2004 and the contract for clean-up was advertised for bid by the DEC in June 2004. The DEC will manage and oversee the on-site clean-up along with their engineering consultant, URS, from Buffalo, NY. The \$3.85 million contract for soil remediation will be performed by Clayton Group Services, of Edison, New Jersey. DEP has already installed the recovery well and is working with their engineering consultant, Malcolm Pirnie, to complete the off-site groundwater remedial design and bid the work by the Spring 2005.