

For Immediate Release
#41-18

UPDATE ON THE CITY'S RESPONSE TO THE MANHATTAN STEAM MAIN EXPLOSION

Reception center open for affected individuals at 10 East 15th Street

July 19, 2018 – The City's Emergency Management Department continues to coordinate the interagency response to the steam main explosion that occurred in Manhattan at West 21st Street and 5th Avenue on Thursday, July 19. Several City agencies including the FDNY, NYPD, and the Departments of Environmental Protection, Buildings, Health and Mental Hygiene, and Emergency Management continue to operate on scene. Con Edison and the American Red Cross in Greater NY are also coordinating response operations.

The area of West 19th Street to West 22nd Street between Broadway and Avenue of Americas remains a potential affected area pending an assessment of air and debris in the vicinity. A total of 49 buildings were evacuated today due to the steam main explosion. Currently, 44 buildings are being assessed for asbestos contamination (*see attached map*). Approximately 500 individuals are displaced from 249 residential units within the potential affected area. Individuals will not be permitted to enter these buildings until after they have been assessed.

A reception center has been opened for affected individuals at the Clinton School at 10 East 15th Street until 10:00PM tonight. This reception center is for information inquiries only. Individuals who live or work within the potential affected area and need to retrieve needed medical supplies or pets should report to the reception center, where escorts will be coordinated if possible. The reception center will reopen on Friday, July 20th at 8:00AM. The American Red Cross in Greater NY will be at the reception center to assist evacuated residents.

Expect traffic delays, road closures, and the presence of emergency personnel in the vicinity of West 21st Street and 5th Avenue. The following streets are closed to vehicular and pedestrian street closures:

- West 23rd Street from 6th Avenue to Madison Avenue
- 5th Avenue from West 23rd Street to West 17th Street
- Broadway from West 23rd Street to West 17th Street
- All crosstown traffic from 6th Avenue to Broadway from West 23rd Street to West 17th Street

FDNY:

At 6:39 a.m. FDNY units received an initial report for a steam explosion at the location of 121 5th Avenue in Manhattan. Units arrived in under five minutes and began evacuating and securing the surrounding areas. The incident escalated to a 2-alarm at 7:04 a.m. and transitioned to a 3-alarm scenario at 7:39 a.m., prompting a response of a total of 39 FDNY units and 140 members. FDNY deployed its mass decontamination task force on 19th and 22nd Street as a precaution for hazardous materials and asbestos from the steam explosion. At this time, FDNY members have

decontaminated approximately 100 individuals including FDNY personnel, Con Edison employees, and area residents.

As of 1:11 p.m. there is a total of 8 patients, 5 being civilians and 3 being members of service.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & MENTAL HYGIENE (DOHMH):

- The public should stay away from the affected area. Emergency crews are still on scene assessing the situation.
- If you were exposed to debris from the steam-pipe explosion you should remove all clothing and shower. Soiled clothing should be sealed in a clear plastic bag and set aside until further notice. Con Edison is accepting bagged clothing from people who were in the immediate area of this morning's steam pipe rupture at 5th Avenue and 21st Street in Manhattan, as tests showed asbestos was released.
- People who live or work within the affected area should keep windows closed until clean-up is completed. Window air conditioners should be set to re-circulate indoor air. If you see or have debris from the steam pipe explosion, you should notify your landlord, building owner, or building manager. Debris should not be disturbed. New York City agencies are working to determine what contamination is present and the extent of impact.
- DOHMH and other city agencies will continue to provide updates as new information is made available.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DEP):

- DEP remains on scene to monitor asbestos levels while the clean-up and re-occupancy progresses.
- Sixteen DEP asbestos inspectors are conducting physical assessments of each building in the area, coordinated with NYPD, FDNY, and DOHMH.

NYPD:

- Hundreds of NYPD personnel responded to the incident.

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS:

- Approximately 500 individuals are displaced from 249 residential units within the potential affected area.
- Buildings inspectors and forensic engineers remain on the scene to assist with structural assessments and engineering expertise.

MTA:

- MTA reports the following impacts to mass transit as a result of the explosion:
- MTA Subway is bypassing the West 23rd Street station (the R and W Lines).
- MTA buses:

- Detoured - M1, M2, M3, M55, M23-SBS, X1, X10, X17, X27, X28
- Delayed - BxM3, BxM4, BxM6, BxM7, BxM8, BxM9, BxM10, BxM11, BxM18, QM21, BM1, BM2, BM3, BM4

NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

- The New York City Emergency Management Department has activated the City's Emergency Operations Center in response to the steam pipe explosion on 5th Avenue and continues to coordinate the interagency response on scene. City agencies continue to operate in the area.

CON EDISON:

- Con Edison is accepting bagged clothing from people who were in the immediate area of this morning's steam pipe rupture at 5th Avenue and 21st Street in Manhattan, as tests showed asbestos was released.
- Those who were in the immediate area should take a shower, bag their clothing and bring it to Con Edison personnel. The immediate area is 500 feet east or west of 5th Avenue on 20th and 21st streets and 100 feet north and south on 5th Ave.
- Company personnel are at 19th Street and Broadway and at 22nd Street and Broadway until 9 p.m. to accept the clothing. They also have claim forms available for people to submit to receive compensation for their clothes. The claim forms are also available at coned.com.
- Con Edison personnel will also be in the Clinton School, 10 East 15th St., until 10 p.m. to provide claim forms.
- In addition, anyone who was outside the immediate area of the rupture but who wants to exercise an abundance of caution should follow the same procedure.
- Con Edison will provide more details as they become available

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