

For Immediate Release

#46-18

Update #6, 7/26/2018, 4:00 p.m.

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

More than half of the affected buildings are safe and open

36 buildings have been cleared for re-occupancy; nine buildings with some sign of internal debris are aggressively being cleaned before re-occupancy

July 26, 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. City agencies continue to operate in the area, including the FDNY, NYPD, and the Departments of Environmental Protection, Buildings, Health and Mental Hygiene, Transportation, and Emergency Management. Con Edison, NYC Small Business Services, the American Red Cross in Greater NY, and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) are also coordinating response operations.

Following the incident, 45 buildings were located in the "hot zone" and have been assessed for asbestos contamination. Thirty-six buildings have been cleared for re-occupancy, and the City continues to work aggressively to clean the remaining nine buildings before they can be reoccupied.

DEP has collected more than 1,700 outdoor air samples in the area around the steam main explosion to test for the presence of asbestos and the results show that the air is safe for the public. DEP will continue collecting air samples throughout the cleanup process. Air sampling results can be found at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/asbestos/5th-ave-steam-pipe-explosion.shtml>.

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

AFFECTED AREA GREATLY REDUCED:

- Crosstown and pedestrian traffic is open throughout the area, with the exception of the immediately affected areas around the explosion site at 21st Street and 5th Avenue.
- 5th Avenue is open to MTA buses, and buses are bypassing all stops between 18th and 23rd Streets along 5th Avenue.
- Out of an abundance of caution, portions of 20th and 21st Streets between Broadway and 6th Avenue may close to pedestrian traffic as cleaning and abatement work continues.

BUILDING RE-OCCUPANCY:

City agencies are working aggressively to clean up debris and clear affected buildings for re-occupancy. To date, 36 buildings have been cleared for re-occupancy:

1. 119 5th Avenue (which includes 3 East 19th Street)
2. 123 5th Avenue
3. 125 5th Avenue

4. 142 5th Avenue (which includes 1 West 19th Street, 5 West 19th Street)
5. 144 5th Avenue
6. 146 5th Avenue
7. 155 5th Avenue
8. 162 5th Avenue (which includes 1 West 21st Street)
9. 164 5th Avenue
10. 166 5th Avenue
11. 7 West 19th Street
12. 9 West 19th Street
13. 11 West 19th Street (which includes 17 West 19th Street, 10 West 20th Street, and 16 West 20th Street)
14. 4 West 20th Street
15. 5 West 20th Street
16. 6 West 20th Street
17. 7 West 20th Street
18. 9 West 20th Street
19. 11 West 20th Street
20. 15 West 20th Street
21. 17 West 20th Street
22. 4 West 21st Street (which includes 10 West 21st Street)
23. 5 West 21st Street
24. 7 West 21st Street
25. 12 West 21st Street
26. 16 West 21st Street
27. 18 West 21st Street
28. 19 West 21st Street
29. 22 West 21st Street
30. 29 West 21st Street
31. 30 West 21st Street
32. 5 East 20th Street
33. 7 East 20th Street
34. 16 West 22nd Street (which includes 15 West 21st Street)
35. 10 East 21st Street (which includes 915 Broadway)
36. 927 Broadway

BUILDINGS CONTAINING INTERNAL DEBRIS:

City agencies are working aggressively to clean the nine buildings that have some sign of internal debris before they can be reoccupied:

1. 129 – 131 5th Avenue
2. 133 5th Avenue
3. 135 5th Avenue
4. 137 5th Avenue
5. 139 5th Avenue
6. 141 5th Avenue (which includes 145 5th Avenue)
7. 160 5th Avenue

8. 149 5th Avenue (which includes 921 and 925 Broadway)
9. 3 West 20th Street (which includes 156 5th Avenue)

For buildings requiring asbestos abatement, inspectors from the Health Department and DEP are re-inspecting common areas and roofs once abatement has been completed.

Once a building is cleared for re-occupancy, residents are asked to report any visible contamination from the steam pipe incident in an apartment to Con Edison by visiting the Reception Center at 10 East 15th street, or calling Con Edison at (212) 358 4565.

RECEPTION CENTER FOR AFFECTED RESIDENTS:

A reception center for affected individuals remains open at the Clinton School at 10 East 15th Street. The reception center will operate from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Friday, 7/27, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, 7/28, and Sunday, 7/29. This reception center is for information inquiries only and is currently staffed with representatives from the New York City Departments of Emergency Management, Environmental Protection, and Health and Mental Hygiene along with Con Edison, the American Red Cross in Greater NY, ASPCA, the Animal Care Center of NYC, and the New York State Department of Financial Services. 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. Residents can visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/em/resources/steam-main.page> for building inspection progress.

The reception center has received 444 visits since Thursday, July 19.

The City is working with the Hotel Trade Council and the Hotel Association of New York City to accommodate residents who were affected by Thursday's steam explosion. To date, four families (10 individuals and 1 dog), have been assisted. Affected residents seeking a temporary room should visit the Reception Center at 10 East 15th street for more information.

RE-OCCUPYING YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS:

What steps must happen before an affected building can be reopened?

City agencies, Con Edison and building owners must work together to complete these steps:

- Cleaning the outside of the building
- Re-inspecting the outside of the building after cleaning
- Inspecting the roof and common areas for debris
- Removing any debris from the roof and common areas of the building
- Replacing HVAC filters if the building has a central HVAC system
- Assessing and analyzing indoor air quality

Building owners will receive a letter from the Health Department and the Department of Environmental Protection when their building is ready for re-occupancy. Copies of re-occupancy letters are available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/asbestos/5th-ave-steam-pipe-explosion.shtml>.

Once a building can be re-occupied, any restaurant it houses may reopen. The Health Department does not require a food safety inspection.

Due to the prolonged vacancy of many of these buildings, it is recommended that building management ensure that all faucets are turned on for at least 30 minutes prior to use in order to flush the stagnant water from building pipes.

What if there is debris inside my workplace or home?

If you see debris in your home or workplace, you should visit the reception center at 10 East 15th Street where representatives from Con Edison, the Health Department and the Department of Environmental Protection are on-site from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., or you can call 212-358-4565. **Do not disturb, sweep or vacuum the debris.**

AFFECTED BUSINESSES:

NYC Small Business Services (SBS) is maintaining a presence at the reception center at 10 East 15th, and continues to work with the Flatiron 23rd Street Partnership and city agency partners to meet the needs of impacted businesses. The SBS mobile unit will remain at this same location on Friday 7/27 to provide emergency response services, starting at 9:30 a.m.

SBS can advise on insurance claims and applications for compensation, and troubleshoot business access issues. Business owners may visit nyc.gov/sbs for FAQs on emergency services, or call 212-618-8810 for immediate help.

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