




THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

EDWARD SKYLER  
DEPUTY MAYOR FOR ADMINISTRATION

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg

From: Edward Skyles 

Subject: Update on Search for Human Remains at the World Trade Center Site

Date: December 29, 2006

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Progress is being made as we conduct the expanded search for human remains at and near the World Trade Center site. We are on the schedule I presented to you last month and we still expect this effort to conclude next fall. Below is an update on several issues.

**1. World Trade Center Site**

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) has finished sifting through the material from the original seven Con Ed manholes and two service boxes from the Haul Road on the World Trade Center (WTC) site. The vast majority of the remains (202 out of 209) came from the first manhole, the discovery of which led to this renewed search. No remains were recovered in the fill surrounding the manholes or the two service boxes which were emptied.

The exploratory excavation of the Haul Road began earlier this month, with the digging of a trench down the length of the road from Liberty to Vesey Streets. The trench is approximately five-feet wide and its depth ranges from 18 inches to eight feet. The trenching approach was recommended by the forensic anthropologists at OCME because it will provide the most comprehensive indication of which areas of the road require further excavation.

OCME recently completed an analysis of its findings from the trench. Based on the appearance of what could be WTC-related debris in the trench, the majority of the Haul Road requires further excavation. The identified area is approximately the southern three-quarters of the road, but excludes the bridge that extends over the south projection

of the WTC slurry wall. The excavation work is being scheduled and coordinated with the Port Authority and the excavated portions of the road will be rebuilt. In the northern section of the road, where no WTC debris was observed, we are stripping the blacktop to confirm that there is no WTC debris present. In addition, we are excavating and sifting one small section of the northern part of the road to facilitate the Port Authority's reconstruction of the site. Finally, we are developing a plan for the exploratory excavations of the 140 Liberty Street parcel, the site of the former St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church.

## **2. Building Searches**

OCME and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) completed searching the rooftops of the Millennium Hotel at 55 Church Street and 1 Liberty Plaza earlier this month. Nine days were spent on these searches during difficult weather conditions. All the ballast on the two rooftops was sifted by hand by forensic anthropologists from OCME and no remains were found.

At 130 Liberty Street (Deutsche Bank), only floors 1-5 remain to be searched by OCME and DEP, which will be done early next year. So far 766 remains have been recovered from this building's roof. OCME has conducted walkthroughs at 130 Cedar Street and 30 West Broadway (Fiterman Hall). The searches of these buildings and their rooftops will begin when the buildings' owners and contractors have received the necessary approvals.

## **3. Subterranean Structures**

Con Edison and Verizon have finished surveying the 430 structures identified in the October 27<sup>th</sup> report as requiring a sifting of whatever material is in them. The surveys indicate that more material than was originally anticipated will be removed from the structures for sifting. The contents of approximately 165 DEP structures will also be collected and sifted at 11 Water Street as well. This part of the operation will begin next week.

## **4. 11 Water Street**

The facility at the site of the former Office of Emergency Management (OEM) headquarters at 11 Water Street in Brooklyn became operational on Monday, December 18. The current equipment can accommodate ten people at a time sifting for remains and personal effects. OCME is overseeing the operation with support from the OEM, the Police Department and the Fire Department. The site can accommodate additional sifting equipment and personnel to handle the increased amount of material we expect from the subterranean structures and the WTC site.

## **5. Fresh Kills Landfill**

We have received permission from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to take post-sifted material to the Fresh Kills Landfill on Staten Island, where it will be temporarily stored in containers. Seven containers have already been transported there and the final disposition of this material will await the resolution of the lawsuit currently pending in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York.

## **6. Worker Health and Safety**

Health and Safety Plans (HASPs) have been implemented at every site where work is being done. They include extensive environmental testing for all material which is recovered and require personnel to wear the appropriate personal protective equipment. These plans were developed by the Department of Design and Construction's environmental consultant in close cooperation with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration at the Department of Labor and the relevant State and City agencies.

## **7. Administrative Issues**

Finally, we have worked with the Office of Management and Budget to create a budget for the search, which we presently estimate at \$30 million. Also, several emergency contracts were registered by the Comptroller so that necessary labor and equipment needs could be met.

I will continue to keep you updated as this important effort progresses.