

INTRODUCTION

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Background

- ◆ The Aftermath of the World Trade Center Tragedy of September 11th Resulted in Potential Environmental Health Risks for the Residents and Workers of New York City.
- ◆ As a result, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) Requested that its University-based Environmental Health and Children's Centers Apply their Scientific Expertise to Investigate these Potential Risks.

Multiple NIEHS Environmental Health and Children's Centers Are Involved



NIEHS Children's Centers:

- Columbia University
- Mount Sinai Medical Center

NIEHS Environmental Health Centers:

- Columbia University
- NYU School of Medicine
- Univ. of Medicine & Dentistry of NJ
- Johns Hopkins University
- University of North Carolina



Despite Governmental Assurances, Press Reporting of WTC Pollution Risk Has Not Changed Much Since October, 2001

- ◆ N.Y. Daily News, October 26, 2001
 - ◆ **A TOXIC NIGHTMARE AT DISASTER SITE**
- ◆ N.Y. Daily News, November 14, 2001:
 - ◆ **STUYVESANT PARENTS STILL AIR WARY**
- ◆ Wall Street Journal, December 26, 2001:
 - ◆ **TESTS SAY AIR IS SAFE, BUT SOME PEOPLE FEEL ILL NEAR GROUND ZERO**
- ◆ New York Times, May 15, 2002:
 - ◆ **AIR TESTING AFTER SEPT. 11 ATTACK IS BOTH PERPLEXING AND REASSURING**

Lessons Learned

- ◆ Premature declarations of “safety” were in contrast to the “World Trade Center Cough” experience of many people in Lower Manhattan.
- ◆ This increased both distrust of government and the public’s concern about health risks.
- ◆ The public wants facts upon which they can make individual decisions, not just reassurances.
- ◆ More extensive research into the potential health risks of WTC pollution exposure is required.

Forum Goals

- ◆ To **Report Progress** by the National Institute of Environmental Medicine (NIEHS) Centers in their Ongoing Assessments of the Potential Environmental Health Impacts of the World Trade Center Disaster
- ◆ To Have Scientific Experts **Address Community Questions and Concerns** Regarding the WTC Disaster's Possible Environmental Health Impacts