



# EPA is Working to Reduce Potential Exposure to Radiation from the Former Wolff Alport Chemical Company in Ridgewood, New York

September 2012

## INTRODUCTION

The United States Environmental Protection Agency, and State and City of New York are working to reduce potential exposure to radiation caused by operations at the former Wolff Alport Chemical Company in Ridgewood, Queens. Wolff Alport, which processed and sold minerals containing thorium, ran its operations from the 1920's to 1954 at 1125-1139 Irving Avenue in Ridgewood. The area of concern consists of approximately six businesses and commercial properties near the intersection of Irving Avenue and Cooper Avenue where sands, containing naturally-occurring radioactive materials rich in thorium, were processed and disposed of.

New York State and New York City conducted various surveys and testing over the years that confirm the presence of residual radioactive contamination from the Wolff Alport facility. The EPA has confirmed the state and city's findings. The testing indicates that there is no immediate threat to nearby residents, employees or customers of businesses in the affected area along Irving and Cooper Avenues. Exposure, however, to this residual radioactive contamination may pose a health threat under certain long-term exposure scenarios. The EPA and the City and State of New York are all working together to reduce these potential long term exposures to radiation.

## NEXT STEPS

In August 2012 the state of New York requested EPA assistance in reducing potential exposures posed by residual radioactive contamination at the site. The EPA anticipates that work will begin in October 2012 to determine the most appropriate actions to reduce potential exposures to radiation. The EPA plans to install a chain link fence around a vacant parcel of land adjacent to the businesses to prevent trespassing onto an area where radiation contamination is present. Possible additional actions may include installation of mitigation systems in building basements to keep radon gas from entering work areas, restricting access to some areas of the affected businesses and the placement of shielding material, such as steel and concrete. The EPA is working with state and city agencies and other federal agencies to assess whether long term cleanup measures are needed.

## Contacts & Where to Get More Information

**Thursday, September 27<sup>th</sup> Drop In Sessions hosted by the EPA, City and State of New York  
(For Businesses, Property Owners & Employees)**

**10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon**

**Frances Carter School I.S. 384 (Library)  
242 Cooper Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11207**

**4:00 PM to 6:00 PM**

**Washington Irving Library (Basement)  
360 Irving Avenue (at Woodbine Street)  
Brooklyn, NY 11237**

### U.S. EPA

Cecilia Echols  
Public Affairs  
(212) 637-3678  
800-346-5009 (toll free)  
[echols.cecilia@epa.gov](mailto:echols.cecilia@epa.gov)

### New York City

Jeanine Prud'homme  
Department of Health  
and Mental Hygiene  
(212) 442-9994  
[jprudhom@health.nyc.gov](mailto:jprudhom@health.nyc.gov)

### New York City

Angela Licata  
Dept. of Env. Protection  
(718) 595-4398  
[AngelaL@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:AngelaL@dep.nyc.gov)

### New York State

John Emery  
Department of Health  
(518) 474-7354 Ext 1  
[jce02@health.state.ny.us](mailto:jce02@health.state.ny.us)

Eric Daly  
On-Scene Coordinator  
(732) 321-4350  
[daly.eric@epa.gov](mailto:daly.eric@epa.gov)

Philip (Andy) Karam  
Health Physicist  
Department of Health  
and Mental Hygiene  
(212) 788-9810  
[pkaram@health.nyc.gov](mailto:pkaram@health.nyc.gov)

John Abunaw  
Dept. of Env. Conservation  
(518) 402-8776  
[jeabunaw@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:jeabunaw@gw.dec.state.ny.us)

**EPA Web site: <http://www.epa.gov/region02/waste/wolff/>**