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Memo spills dirt on EPA's WTC cleanup

By MAGGIE HABERMAN
DAILY NEWS CITY HALL BUREAU

Buildings around Ground Zero were still contaminated even after a cleanup led by the feds, Rep. Jerrold Nadler charged yesterday.

Nadler (D-Manhattan) released a memo from a veteran Environmental Protection Agency official, Cate Jenkins.

Jenkins, who still works for the EPA, found that 114 Liberty St., an apartment building facing Ground Zero, was laden with pollutants even after a cleanup overseen by the EPA. She also charged that the agency knew what it was doing and simply didn't want to pay for new cleaning.

The memo was written after a private firm hired by the building's tenants to test the dust found high levels of asbestos and cancer-causing toxins, Nadler said.

"I stand here with New Yorkers who are still, two years later, being victimized," Nadler said.

Dave Stanke, a 114 Liberty St. tenant who hasn't been able to live in his apartment for two years, said, "We're trying to be rebuilders instead of victims."

But he added, "Our government betrayed us."

Nadler and Stanke were referring to a report by the EPA's inspector general revealing that the agency released misleading assurances about the safety of the air in lower Manhattan shortly after Sept. 11, 2001.

Lisa Harrison, an EPA spokeswoman, wouldn't comment on the Jenkins memo, but accused Nadler and other politicians of exploiting the issue.

"The depth of cynicism to which some of these elected officials have engaged"

Originally published on September 10, 2003

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