

Fallout



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What public officials failed to say about post-9/11 New York air.

I am glad to reassure the people of New York...that their air is safe to breathe and their water is safe to drink.—Christie Todd Whitman, Administrator of the EPA, September 18, 2002

Officials knew that their own preliminary environmental tests of the air, dust, and water in lower Manhattan...found considerable amounts of asbestos and heavy metals.—from Fallout

On the strength of reassurances from Christie Todd Whitman and Mayor Giuliani that it was safe to do so, thousands of Lower Manhattan residents moved back to their apartments within weeks of September 11, kids returned to local schools, office staff resumed work. There was just one problem: those reassurances were not based in fact.

A source of controversy and embarrassment when it first appeared in hardcover, investigative reporter Juan González's damning indictment of the Giuliani administration and EPA shows that, in their rush to get the city and Wall Street in particular back to work, the mayor and Whitman put tens of thousands of downtown residents and workers at risk.

Initially dismissed as alarmist, Fallout has since been corroborated by reports in The National news media documenting the long-term health implications of an enormous failure of leadership.

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