COMMUNITY AVAILABILITY SESSION

NEW YORK STATE | Department of Environmental Conservation

SEPTEMBER 2025

Gowanus Canal Area Wide Soil Vapor Intrusion Investigation

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is working closely with the State Department of Health (DOH) to protect public health and the environment in the Gowanus Canal area. DEC and DOH are working with partners from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to undertake the comprehensive investigation and cleanup of former industrial sites near the Gowanus Canal. New York State is committed to keeping the community informed about ongoing cleanup actions and efforts to address legacy contamination in the Gowanus neighborhood. DEC and DOH are holding a community availability session on Oct. 8 from 7-9 p.m. at the Children's School to discuss the community-wide investigation and cleanup activities at dozens of sites in New York State's Brownfield and State Superfund cleanup programs to help answer questions and address community concerns.

AVAILABILITY SESSION

Wednesday, October 8, 7-9 p.m.
P.S. 372 – The Children's School
Gymnasium – 215 1st Street

Join DEC and DOH to learn about the Gowanus Canal Area Wide Soil Vapor Intrusion Investigation

For more on State availability sessions, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5XomDsUkc_k

Availability Session

During the availability session, DEC and DOH will discuss the 2024-2025 heating season sampling performed as well as upcoming activities for the 2025-2026 heating season. This will help inform Gowanus residents and other stakeholders about the State's ongoing investigation to assess where legacy contamination may be affecting indoor air quality in Gowanus Canal Area buildings and how that data is incorporated into an expanded soil vapor intrusion (SVI) investigation. SVI is a process by which chemicals underground can enter the indoor air of a building through the basement, crawlspace, or slab.

This expanded State sampling effort builds upon a DEC investigation started in the 2023 heating season to more fully assess the potential for SVI from contamination at various brownfield cleanup sites in the Gowanus area.

Please see the map on page 3 for the SVI study area. The planned sampling approach for the upcoming 2025-2026 heating season will focus on resoliciting all properties that have not responded, conducting sampling on buildings where requested, as well as resampling certain properties for post-system installation monitoring.

A report regarding the Gowanus Canal Area Wide 2024-2025 heating season sampling will be posted on DEC's website at dec.ny.gov/gowanus prior to the Oct. 8 community availability session. The report details the number of buildings solicited for soil vapor intrusion sampling (1,604), the number of buildings sampled during the 2024-2025 heating season (258), properties requiring mitigation (23), and an overview of the results.

Systems Installed

When soil vapor intrusion sampling results indicate mitigation is needed for buildings participating in New York State's investigations, a DEC contractor installs vapor intrusion mitigation systems or other acceptable measures. These systems are tailored to individual building conditions. After installation, additional sampling is conducted to verify the system is effective at preventing contamination from affecting indoor air quality.

Of the 23 buildings which required mitigation, two have been completed, and 21 are currently in design or installation. After installation of the SVI mitigation system, DEC will perform additional indoor air testing to confirm that the system is functioning as designed.

Contact DEC for Soil Vapor Intrusion Sampling

If you are a property owner in the Gowanus Canal Area who has not yet responded to New York State's offer

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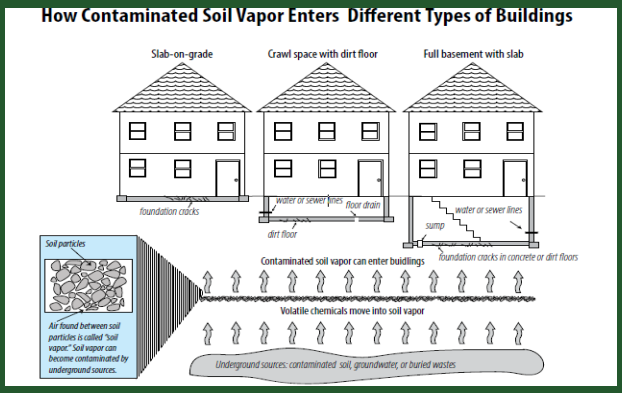
for indoor air sampling and are interested, the owner can contact DEC project manager Aaron Fischer at aaron.fischer@dec.ny.gov or (518) 598-7799. Additionally, if you are a tenant in a building and would like sampling, contact your landlord/property owner to request that the property owner comply with sampling requests. DEC and DOH will work with the owners of other properties in the area and conduct additional investigations as appropriate.

What is Soil Vapor Intrusion (SVI)?

Soil vapor intrusion is a process by which chemicals in the subsurface can enter the indoor air of a building through the basement, crawlspace, or slab, as depicted in the below graphic. New York State requires comprehensive evaluations of indoor air quality whenever these contaminants are detected at a Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) site.



Receive Site Fact Sheets by Email

Have site information such as this community update and fact sheet sent right to your email inbox. DEC invites you to sign up with one or more contaminated site email listservs at: www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html

It's quick, it's free, and it will help keep you better informed. As a listserv member, you will periodically receive site-related information and announcements for all contaminated sites in the county(ies) you select.

For more information on New York's environmental investigation and cleanup actions in the Gowanus Canal area, visit https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/127317.html

WHO TO CONTACT

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LISTSERV: SIGN UP TO STAY INFORMED

https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html

Gowanus Canal Area Wide Soil Vapor Intrusion Investigation

Figure 1-1
Gowanus Canal
SVI Investigation Area

Gowanus Canal Area
Brooklyn, New York