

BACKGROUND

Martin Tower is scheduled to be demolished on Sunday, May 19, 2019. This can release dust and other contaminants into the air, decreasing the air quality temporarily. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the contractors doing the demolition have taken precautions to protect the community during and after the demolition. The Department of Health (DOH) will evaluate the air quality data collected before, during and immediately after the demolition to determine any exposure-related health effects. If necessary, DOH can also review hospital emergency room records to identify any possible increase in respiratory-related health concerns in the days following the demolition.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Bethlehem residents have been concerned about exposures to dust and other airborne contaminants that may come from the demolition. Some residents live less than 1,000 feet from the tower.



HOW WILL THE AIR QUALITY BE PROTECTED?

Asbestos-containing materials have been removed from the building as required. Steps have been taken to decrease the amount of dust present during demolition.

WHAT IF YOU ARE EXPOSED?

If the measures taken to decrease the amount of dust don't contain and control the spread of dust, those outside near the building may be temporarily exposed to contaminants associated with demolition. Short-term exposure to the demolition-related contaminants, such as dust and particulate matter, are not expected to cause long-term, harmful health effects. Temporary effects, such as throat irritation and coughing, are possible. People with pre-existing respiratory conditions could experience more severe short-lived effects, such as an asthma attack.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT EXPOSURE?

- Stay inside with windows and doors closed for at least 30 minutes to one hour after the demolition, depending on weather conditions.
- If possible, turn off your home's fresh air intake system before the demolition.
- Stay upwind of the demolition if you choose to remain outside.
- Wear an N95 respirator if you choose to stay outside. N95 respirators can be purchased at your local hardware store.

If you have any questions, contact us at env.health.concern@pa.gov.