
RE: Gowanus Canal CAG: Land Use Committee Letter Regarding the Luquer & Court Street TCE Plume Trackdown Study

1 message

McLaughlin, Scarlett E (HEALTH) <scarlett.mclaughlin@health.ny.gov>

Mon, Apr 6, 2026 at 10:50 AM

To: Steve Marcus <stevemarcus7@gmail.com>

Cc: "Gorton, Lisa A (DEC)" <Lisa.Gorton@dec.ny.gov>, "Fischer, Aaron G (DEC)" <Aaron.Fischer@dec.ny.gov>, "Dudek, Heidi M (DEC)" <heidi.dudek@dec.ny.gov>, "Tucholski, Daniel P (HEALTH)" <Daniel.Tucholski@health.ny.gov>

Hi Steve,

Thank you for reaching out. Our responses are in blue:

Specifically, community members are seeking clarity on:**- The relationship between the concentration of contaminants that are unacceptable for drinking water, as shown in the Trackdown Study, and the concentration of contaminants that could cause Soil Vapor Intrusion vulnerability or contact vulnerability.**

The concentration of contaminants that could cause Soil Vapor Intrusion vulnerability or contact vulnerability is not exclusively related to soil or groundwater concentrations. A complete pathway exposure assessment must be evaluated on a case- by-case basis to make this determination. The Gowanus site wide soil vapor study incorporates a pathway assessment evaluation into the decision making.

- How the NYS Department of Health, in coordination with NYSDEC, determines whether additional buildings should be contacted or encouraged to participate in SVI sampling following the identification of groundwater contamination.

The identification of volatile organic compound (VOC) contamination in groundwater helps to inform where SVI may occur, but it is only part of the picture. A complete pathway exposure assessment must be evaluated on a case- by-case basis to make this determination. Soil vapor must be investigated as an independent media as SVI impacts do not necessarily align with the locations of groundwater impacts.

- Whether buildings near the wells where chlorinated VOCs were detected have been, or will be, prioritized for outreach or further evaluation.

DEC and DOH have consistently prioritized outreach throughout the study area to increase participation in the Gowanus Area-wide SVI Investigation. Additionally, each site that is investigated under the State's remedial programs undergoes comprehensive investigations of any soil, groundwater, and/or soil vapor contamination. The nature and extent of contamination associated with these sites is investigated during each's site's required Remedial Investigation. This includes a determination as to whether any site-related contamination could be migrating off-site. If migration of contamination is identified, it is investigated, either by a remedial party or the State.

- How all building occupants, including sensitive populations such as pregnant individuals, young children and all people who live, work or learn in potentially impacted buildings are informed about potential risks and available protective measures.

The property owner or designee is notified of sampling results via a phone call and data transmittal letter from DOH. In these communications, the property owner is reminded to notify any occupants/tenants of the results as per DEC's Tenant Notification Law (ECL_27-2405).

We recognize that participation in SVI sampling is voluntary, and we also understand that effective outreach and clear communication are essential to protecting public health. With that in mind, we would welcome the opportunity to assist, if helpful, in community outreach efforts—such as sharing information about SVI sampling, helping connect residents with the appropriate contacts, or facilitating communication through established community channels.

DEC and DOH continue to encourage the community to participate in the area-wide study. I encourage your group to reach out to DEC regarding this offer.

Thanks Steve.

Scarlett Messier-McLaughlin, P.G.

Chief, Region 2 (excluding Bronx) - Bureau of Environmental Exposure Investigation

New York State Department of Health

Empire State Plaza – Corning Tower Room #1739, Albany, NY 12237

Phone: 518.402.7874 Email: Scarlett.McLaughlin@health.ny.gov



From: Steve Marcus <stevemarcus7@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2026 5:52 PM

To: McLaughlin, Scarlett E (HEALTH) <scarlett.mclaughlin@health.ny.gov>

Subject: Gowanus Canal CAG: Land Use Committee Letter Regarding the Luquer & Court Street TCE Plume Trackdown Study

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Hi Scarlett,

Thanks for responding.

The Land Use Committee is scheduled to meet the evening of Tuesday, April 7th.

Thanks for all your help!

I hope that you have a great evening.

Kind regards,
Steve

On Thu, Apr 2, 2026 at 4:03 PM McLaughlin, Scarlett E (HEALTH) <scarlett.mclaughlin@health.ny.gov> wrote:

Hi Steve-

We are working on the responses to your questions. I know you mentioned next week is the next Land Use Committee meeting; what date is it? I can try to expedite the process to have something to you by then. Thank you

Scarlett Messier-McLaughlin, P.G.

Chief, Region 2 (excluding Bronx) - Bureau of Environmental Exposure Investigation

New York State Department of Health

Empire State Plaza – Corning Tower Room #1739, Albany, NY 12237

Phone: 518.402.7874 Email: Scarlett.McLaughlin@health.ny.gov



From: Steve Marcus <stevemarcus7@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 31, 2026 1:15 PM

To: McLaughlin, Scarlett E (HEALTH) <scarlett.mclaughlin@health.ny.gov>

Subject: Gowanus Canal CAG: Land Use Committee Letter Regarding the Luquer & Court Street TCE Plume Trackdown Study

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Hi Scarlett,

It was great seeing you at last week's meeting.

Would it be possible to get a response to the Land Use Committee's questions in advance of next week's meeting?

I know I'll be asked.

Thanks for your help!

Regards,

Steve

On Wed, Feb 4, 2026 at 2:55 PM McLaughlin, Scarlett E (HEALTH) <scarlett.mclaughlin@health.ny.gov> wrote:

Hi Steve,

Thank you for your email; great questions! We will review the questions below, discuss internally, and provide a response as soon as possible (goal of next week). Thank you

Scarlett Messier-McLaughlin, P.G.

Chief, Region 2 (excluding Bronx) - Bureau of Environmental Exposure Investigation

New York State Department of Health

Empire State Plaza – Corning Tower Room #1739, Albany, NY 12237

Phone: 518.402.7874 Email: Scarlett.McLaughlin@health.ny.gov



From: Steve Marcus <stevemarcus7@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 1:21 PM

To: McLaughlin, Scarlett E (HEALTH) <scarlett.mclaughlin@health.ny.gov>

Cc: andrea <andrea@gowanuscanalconservancy.org>; Jason Schwartzman - New CAG Member <jischwartzman@gmail.com>; Hildegaard Link - CAG Member <hildegaardl@earthlink.net>; Louis Kleinman - CAG Member <Louiskleinman@yahoo.com>; Susan Yung <susanyung2@gmail.com>; Mark Yarish - CAG Member <mark.yarish@gmail.com>; Joan Rodriguez <jblue406@aol.com>; Erica Eliason - CAG Member <eleliason@gmail.com>; Lisa Bowstead <LisaBowstead@gmail.com>; Katia Kelly <pardonmeinbrooklyn@gmail.com>; Margaret Maugenest <mmaugenest@aol.com>; Peter Reich - CAG Member <swiffolders@gmail.com>

Subject: Gowanus Canal CAG: Land Use Committee Letter Regarding the Luquer & Court Street TCE Plume Trackdown Study

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Hi Scarlett,

Hope your week is going well.

At last night's CAG Land Use Committee meeting, I was asked to forward the following to you.

Thanks in advance for your assistance in this matter.

Regards,

Steve

To: Scarlett Messier-McLaughlin, P.G., Region Chief at the New York State Department of Health

Dear Ms. Messier-McLaughlin,

We are writing on behalf of community members engaged in reviewing the Court and Luquer Street Source Area Trackdown Study and the related Soil Vapor Intrusion (SVI) investigations in the Gowanus Canal area.

We know that the Trackdown Study was conducted to better understand the subsurface sources and movement of chlorinated VOCs identified during the SVI investigations, and that the study concludes that follow-up actions related to potential exposure are being addressed through the ongoing SVI program. We appreciate the work that has been done to investigate these issues and to mitigate risk where indoor air exceedances have been identified.

As the community continues to review the findings, there is an interest in better understanding the data as well as what follow-up steps are planned to ensure that residents remain protected—particularly in buildings that may be more vulnerable due to their proximity to groundwater contamination identified in the Trackdown Study.

Specifically, community members are seeking clarity on:

- The relationship between the concentration of contaminants that are unacceptable for drinking water, as shown in the Trackdown Study, and the concentration of contaminants that could cause Soil Vapor Intrusion vulnerability or contact vulnerability.

- How the NYS Department of Health, in coordination with NYSDEC, determines whether additional

buildings should be contacted or encouraged to participate in SVI sampling following the identification of groundwater contamination.

- Whether buildings near the wells where chlorinated VOCs were detected have been, or will be, prioritized for outreach or further evaluation.

- How all building occupants, including sensitive populations such as pregnant individuals, young children and all people who live, work or learn in potentially impacted buildings are informed about potential risks and available protective measures.

We recognize that participation in SVI sampling is voluntary, and we also understand that effective outreach and clear communication are essential to protecting public health. With that in mind, we would welcome the opportunity to assist, if helpful, in community outreach efforts—such as sharing information about SVI sampling, helping connect residents with the appropriate contacts, or facilitating communication through established community channels.

Our goal is to support your Department's work by helping ensure that residents have the information they need to make informed decisions about indoor air sampling and mitigation, and that any remaining gaps in coverage are addressed proactively.

Thank you for your time and for your continued efforts to protect public health in the Gowanus community. We would appreciate any information you can share regarding planned follow-up actions and opportunities for coordination.

Kind regards,

Members of the Gowanus Canal CAG's Land Use Committee.

cc: Members of the CAG Land Use Committee

Link to NYSDEC's Luquer & Court Street Trackdown Study.

 [Luquer & Court Study - Report.HW.224414.2025-12-19.report.hw.224414.2025-12-12.](#)

[Court_and_Luquer_S...](#)