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Deputy Mayor Cas Holloway Announces 1,000th Home Completed by Mold Treatment Program

Unique Public-Private Partnership Helps Residents Address Mold and Water Damage Caused by Hurricane Sandy

Deputy Mayor for Operations Cas Holloway, the Mayor's Office of Housing Recovery Operations (HRO), the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, The American Red Cross and the Robin Hood Foundation, announced today that the \$15 million privately-funded mold treatment program has completed more than 1,000 homes to date. The program is administered by Neighborhood Revitalization NYC (NRNYC), an affiliate of Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) with 30 years of experience working in New York City, and is the largest coordinated effort to address mold and water damage caused by Hurricane Sandy in New York City. An additional 800 homes have treatment in progress, and the program is committed to treating at least 2,000 homes with potential to expand.

Over the past few months, NRNYC has been working with HRO, contractors, community-based organizations, local elected officials and other not-for-profit partners engaged in storm-related support, to identify and address New Yorkers' residential mold treatment needs in the hardest hit communities. Additionally, many volunteers and non-profit organizations outside of this program have dedicated time, energy, and resources to mold treatment services in homes citywide.

"The milestone we are announcing today is a reminder that while the effects of Sandy still linger, the City has once again successfully worked with its partners to ensure that homeowners can return to safe and healthy homes," said Deputy Mayor Cas Holloway. "From Rapid Repairs to Build It Back to our mold treatment program, we are still committed to making sure that every New Yorker affected by the storm gets back home."

"In the more than 20 years I have worked in disaster recovery management, this is one the best example of an effective and expandable program to address the significant issue of mold," said Brad Gair, Director of the Mayor's Office of Housing Recovery

Operations. “This program strikes the right balance of government guidance, private funding and non-profit community expertise, and helps us fulfill our mission of returning families to safe, healthy and sustainable homes.”

“The City takes very seriously the challenges presented to New Yorkers by mold since Hurricane Sandy,” said Megan Sheekey, President of the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City. “Although more work remains, this milestone represents a real dent in the problem, achieved thanks to the dedication of LISC, our donors and funding partners. We remain committed to continuing our support for mold treatment, and encourage homeowners still dealing with mold to enroll in this program.”

“There are few things in life as disruptive and distressing as being forced from your own home,” said David Saltzman, Executive Director of Robin Hood. “We are proud to partner with LISC in their efforts to help return so many individuals and families to their communities so they can continue the process of rebuilding their lives.”

“Through LISC and this program, thousands of New Yorkers have been able to return to their homes to enjoy a mold-free, healthy living environment,” said Josh Lockwood, CEO, American Red Cross Greater New York Region. “Thanks to the generosity of our donors, and our solid partnership with the Mayor’s Office of Housing Recovery Operations, Mayor’s Fund and Robin Hood, this work continues every day.”

“Along with our partners we’re pleased that we’ve been able to help New Yorkers take an important step toward recovery,” said Denise Scott, Managing Director, LISC NYC. “There is still more work to be done and we are committed to treating many more homes.”

Residents who qualify for the program receive mold treatment by professional contractors free of charge. First, professionals complete a comprehensive assessment of the home, which includes moisture readings and inspection of basement and first floor levels and crawl spaces where they exist. Next, the home is scheduled for the appropriate mold treatment, which can average 4 to 6 days, depending on the severity of the problem. The process concludes when an inspector verifies that all visible mold has been treated. The program is open to homeowners and renters. Renters need to obtain approval from a landlord in order accept these free services; in cases where they are unable to do so, free legal assistance is available from New York Legal Assistance Group thanks to a Mayor’s Fund grant, and may be accessed by calling 311.

“I have only high praise for the city and the workers and everybody who was involved in this program.” - Saloman Zicherman, Highland Avenue, Sea Gate.

“I’m very appreciative that this program was available for people at the darkest time in their lives. Everyone from start to finish was very helpful, courteous, and polite. I give a lot of credit to everyone that is a part of the program.” - Robert Vento, Fairbanks Avenue, Oakwood Beach.

“I think the program gives people a sense of hope.” - Elizabeth Darby, Bedford Avenue, Breezy Point.

In addition to the mold treatment program, the Mayor’s Fund sponsored 63 mold awareness and safe practice trainings throughout impacted communities and in public housing facilities hit hardest by Sandy, and has distributed 3,230 free mold supply kits at these and other Sandy recovery events. Nearly 1,500 New Yorkers learned how to identify and treat mold at the free trainings run by experts from CUNY Public Health at Hunter College and the University of Medicine & Dentistry of NJ, in partnership with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Mayor’s Community Assistance Unit. Locations for the trainings were identified in consultation with many local elected officials and community groups.

Residents who have mold, or think they might have mold in their homes, are urged to apply for this free program by calling 1-855-740-MOLD (6653). The call center operates Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

About the Mayor’s Office of Housing Recovery Operations

The Mayor’s Office of Housing Recovery Operations is committed to planning and implementing innovative and effective solutions to the housing needs caused by Hurricane Sandy. To this end, the Mayor’s Office of Recovery Operations created and will administer NYC Build it Back, a program to assist residents in the five boroughs whose primary homes were damaged by the storm. Homeowners, landlords and tenants affected by Sandy who still have unmet housing needs are urged to register for NYC Build it Back by calling 311 and ask for NYC Build it Back or going to www.nyc.gov/builditback.

About the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City

The Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City is a nonprofit organization dedicated to innovative public-private partnerships. One hundred percent of donations in response to Hurricane Sandy are being dispersed to relief efforts and organizations. In the immediate aftermath of the storm, contributions helped to support the supply and transport of emergency needs including hot food, toiletries, baby supplies, cleaning materials, warm clothing and medications for New Yorkers. The Mayor’s Fund is now focused on longer-term rebuilding and restoration efforts, including sponsoring a network of housing counselors and legal service providers to help residents, mold awareness and treatment, and loans and grants for affected nonprofit organizations and local businesses. For more information go to www.nyc.gov/fund and follow the Fund on Twitter @NYCMayorsFund.

About the American Red Cross

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers

and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit redcross.org or join our blog at <http://blog.redcross.org>.

About the Robin Hood Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund

Founded in 1988, Robin Hood is New York's largest poverty-fighting organization, and has focused on finding, funding and creating programs and schools that generate meaningful results for families in New York's poorest neighborhoods. The Robin Hood Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund has granted tens of millions of dollars to organizations throughout New York's tri-state region that help individuals and families recover from the devastating effects of the storm. In addition, Robin Hood's board of directors pays all administrative, fundraising and evaluation costs, so 100% of your donation goes directly to organizations helping victims of Hurricane Sandy rebuild their lives.

About LISC

LISC combines corporate, government and philanthropic resources to help community-based organizations revitalize underserved neighborhoods. Since 1980, LISC has raised more than \$7.2 billion to build or rehabilitate more than 196,000 affordable homes and develop 27 million square feet of retail, community and educational space nationwide. LISC's Boston office, opened in 1981, has invested more than \$153 million to help local community groups build 7,000 homes and apartments and 1.3 million square feet of commercial space.

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