

# City provides FAQs on Martin Tower Demolition (36)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Martin Tower, Serious Issues May 7, 2019

*(36th in a series on Martin Tower)*

*Martin Tower demolition May 19*

[www.martintowerbethlehem.com](http://www.martintowerbethlehem.com)

***Informational meeting***

***Thursday, May 9, 6PM***

***Nitschmann Middle School***

“It is amazing to me that so many people are reacting to this implosion  
as entertainment or spectacle rather than a health risk.”

Barbara Diamond

*As of this writing — 3:10PM, this announcement seems only to be on the  
City web page not the above-linked page devoted to the MT demolition*

As the demolition of Martin Tower draws closer, the City of Bethlehem  
has comprised a list of Frequently Asked Questions regarding the  
demolition and precautions.

1) What is the process of demolition by explosives/implosion? The basic premise of explosives demolition is to isolate the key structural supporting elements of the structure (in this case, structural steel columns) and eliminate them sequentially with explosive charges so the weight and construction of the structure can be dynamically controlled with differential velocity to insure that the resultant debris falls in a predetermined area.

2) What regulations are in place to secure public safety? The explosives and demolition industry have regulations in place at local, state and federal levels to ensure Public Safety. Adherence to the regulations is overseen by, and has been coordinated through, the following by the project team: ATF, FAA, Pennsylvania DEP, Bethlehem Police Department, Bethlehem Fire Department, Bethlehem Office of the Fire Marshal, Emergency Medical Services, Bethlehem Emergency Management, Lehigh County Emergency Management, Northampton County Emergency Management, Northampton County 911 Center, Bethlehem Service Center and Lehigh Valley International Airport.

3) What has been done to prepare for the demolition – environmental remediation? (Asbestos removal complete?) All interior demolition was completed. All controlled and hazardous materials (including asbestos) were removed from the building, as required by law, prior to the final demolition permit being issued. Completion of interior demolition (i.e. walls, ceiling, carpeting, doors, etc.) prior implosion results in less dust being created during the implosion activities.

4) Will air quality be monitored before, during and after demolition? Yes. An independent 3rd party firm is conducting particulate and asbestos air quality monitoring before, during and after, the implosion activities.

5) What measures will be taken for dust control? Multiple water sprayers and misting devices will be utilized prior to and during the implosion activities.

6) Are there any precautions residents should take related to dust? Should residents stay indoors during the implosion and if so, for how long? Dust is an unpreventable byproduct of all types of demolition. With a wrecking ball or high-reach excavator, the building is slowly broken up, releasing dust over a lengthy period of time. With implosion, the same overall quantity of dust is released in a matter of seconds, and may linger in the general area for 4 to 6 minutes before crews begin cleanup of streets and sidewalks. Depending on wind speed and direction on the day of the implosion, the dust may or may not reach your properties. As a precautionary measure, we recommend that you see that all windows, doors and air intakes, are closed and to cover any other openings that might allow dust to enter your apartment, house or building. We also recommend that you turn off all exhaust fans before or at the time of the implosion as these might draw air in to your building through cracks in walls and windows. If you find dust uncomfortable or irritating, or if you have any respiratory conditions that would be aggravated by dust, please stay indoors during the demolition.

7) What is the anticipated size of the debris field? The building will incline slightly to the southeast, then fall straight down. Most of the debris from the implosion will come to rest within the footprint of the existing building, or slightly out of the footprint to southeast (toward the center of the 53 acre property).

8) How will the restricted area be cleared and secured? Bethlehem Police Department will clear the area prior to implosion activities, using various methods including foot patrols, motorcycle patrol and marked control units. Lehigh County Emergency Management will be utilizing drone with infrared capabilities to survey the restricted area.

9) Can I fly my drone? No. A temporary flight restriction with a one-half mile radius and 2,500 foot ceiling, has been granted by the FAA on May 19th from 6 to 8 a.m. During the temporary flight restriction, no aircraft (including drones) will be permitted within the restricted area.

10) What is the possibility of utility service interruption (water, gas, electric)? There is no anticipated interruption of utility service. However, as a precaution, representatives from the City Water Department, UGI and PPL, will be on site before, during and after the implosion activities.

11) What is the time frame for the implosion activities? • 5:00 am Bethlehem Police will close Eighth Avenue from Union Boulevard to Bradford Street. • 5:00 am Bethlehem Police will close Eaton Avenue from Elizabeth Avenue to Ralston Road. • 5:00 am Bethlehem Police will close Route 378 North and South Exit Ramps at Eighth Avenue. • 6:00 am the Exclusion Zone surrounding the site will be closed to the public. Details on the limits of the exclusion zone will be provided at a later date. • 6:30 am Bethlehem Police will begin closing Route 378 from Catasauqua Road to the Main Street Ramp. • 7:00 am approximately, as safety and preparations permit, Martin Tower will be demolished by implosion. • 7:10 am assessment will be made by members of the project team to determine any clean-up activities prior to opening any roadways. Any unaffected roadways will be reopened after inspection by Bethlehem Police Department. • It is estimated that by mid-morning all public right of ways will be open and the exclusion zone lifted.

*As reported earlier, Gadfly has learned that reps from the Air Quality Program, Northeast Regional Office, and the Bureau of District Mining Operations will be present Thursday.*