U.S. SECRETARY OF LABOR ELAINE L. CHAO STATEMENT ON CONCLUSION OF WORLD TRADE CENTER RECOVERY

May 30, 2002

On May 30, 2002, the recovery phase and cleanup at the World Trade Center disaster site comes to an end. For more than eight months, three million work hours have been logged on a worksite like no other in our great nation under some of the most dangerous conditions imaginable. Yet, only 35 workers missed workdays due to injury and, most importantly, no more lives were lost to work at a site where so many innocent lives were lost to terrorism.

American workers—from city, state and federal government agencies, trade associations, contractors and labor organizations—formed a partnership to reclaim this site and recover our fellow citizens. And, they've done so safely - with pride, dignity, talent, hard work and dogged determination.

We are proud that over 1,000 Department of Labor and OSHA staff from New York and around the country worked on the site providing safety and health consultation services, performing air sampling and monitoring and collecting other safety data. Over 6,100 workers, including 2,700 New York City fire department employees, were fit-tested for respirators; more than 130,000 respirators were distributed on-site, and in excess of 6,000 personal, area and bulk samples of hazardous substances were collected.

On behalf of the Labor Department and OSHA, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the workers, employers, unions and federal, state and local agencies that, together with the city of New York, successfully completed a very painful, noble, yet necessary job. Finally, I also want to extend our gratitude to the heroes who will remain—the workers of the World Trade Center Emergency Project who, by their presence each day and night, will continue to honor the thousands who died.

Source: United States Department of Labor
www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=NEWS_RELEASES&p_id=1360