

September 13, 2012

Dear City Hall Resident:

Excavation at the construction site for the new School of Public Health and Health Services has progressed to the point that the contractor for this project will begin controlled blasting activities on the project as soon as next Tuesday September 18, 2012. As a result of the type and substance of below grade rock on this site, controlled blasting will be required here similar to recent construction at the Science and Engineering Hall. Controlled blasting is common in DC (and many other areas) where rock formations are near the surface.

Once blasting activities begin, they will likely occur twice daily on weekdays at both 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. into October (pending weather and soil conditions). The controlled blasting at this site is being coordinated with the few remaining controlled blasts at the Science and Engineering Hall site so there are no more than two controlled blasts on any weekday. Below is information regarding frequently asked questions about controlled blasting:

- For many, the air horn signal will be the most noticeable part of this activity and will have a noise impact similar to that of a passing ambulance. The air horn signals are anticipated to be sounded at 15 minutes, five minutes, and one minute prior to the blast and immediately after the blast to indicate "all clear."
- The blasting activity itself will result in limited sound and vibration impacts. The sound of the blast can be compared to that of a door slamming or a large truck. The vibrations will last, at most, a few seconds and will be most noticeable to individuals within close proximity to the site (this will vary depending on a number of factors including weather).
- These activities are highly monitored to ensure they fall within the regulated limits and do not affect any adjacent structures. Seismographs will be located in buildings around the site to monitor the vibrations during blasting operations.
- Although each day's blasting area will be extensively covered with protective mats, the activity may create some minor dirt, powder, or other minor debris. Therefore, occupants of buildings immediately adjacent the site will be asked to keep windows closed during the blasting period (residents will not need to evacuate building during this activity).
- Sidewalks immediately adjacent to the site may be closed temporarily during each blasting event, beginning a few minutes in advance to ensure pedestrians of all abilities have time to relocate.
- Adjacent streets may also be temporarily closed for a few minutes during the blasting events at the direction of D.C. Metropolitan Police and with exceptions for emergency vehicles.
- Blasting materials will not be stored on site and materials for each day's activities will arrive in the morning via a police escort that will remain on site until after completion of the day's blasting and after the materials are removed from site.

We know you may have additional questions so we'll be posting an FAQ factsheet in the lobby of your building and will send additional GW InfoMails. Please let us know if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas for how we can better communicate with your fellow hall mates on this topic by emailing talktogw@gwu.edu or by tweeting [@GWDSAHelps](https://twitter.com/GWDSAHelps).

Sincerely,

Alicia O'Neil Knight, Senior Associate Vice President of Operations

Peter Konwerski, Senior Associate Provost and Dean of Student Affairs