New twists in the story of the personal and toxic nightmare in New York turn up almost every day. There are good ones: Containers of freon (a potentially dangerous refrigerant) were discovered in the disemboweled basement of the World Trade Center completely intact. And there are bad ones: The chief pulmonary physician for city firefighters is treating thousands of rescuers for persistent coughing and chest pain unlike any ordinary post-fire congestion.

The unprecedented need for experts on September 11 brought officials to UMDNJ's School of Public Health (SPH) the day after. Then, SPH asked the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute (EOHSI) to jump in. Raging fires, collapsing buildings, clouds of dust and smoke, physically treacherous conditions, decaying body parts, cutaneous and blood borne pathogens, noise pollution, burning rubble, toxic substances leaking into the ground, water and air...even rats were on the disaster agenda. Heading for ground zero, a UMDNJ "E" team of five specialists left the parking lot in Piscataway at 5:30 am on Monday, September 17. They've been on the case since.

Paul Lioy, PhD, acting associate director of EOHSI says, "Though we've never had to deal with events like these before," EOHSI experts are equipped to respond to crises, including the ones that have been placed center stage as a result of the ongoing environmental onslaught. "Let me put it this way. Our jobs really haven't changed at EOHSI since September 11. The issues have because of the attack and the start of the war on terrorism."

Back in September, the 'E' team's first official instructions were: Proceed to ground zero and make recommenda-

UMDNJ's "E" TEAM AT GROUND ZERO
(WTC) Environmental Health Information Network, a coalition of academic, community and governmental agencies, established to address the health effects of the WTC tragedy and to provide the public and healthcare professionals with up-to-date resources and information. Community Outreach and Education Programs at NIEHS Centers at Columbia University, Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, New York University and EOHSI are managing the network, which is posting information on a website, producing fact sheets and presenting community forums. For your answers, go to: http://www.eohsi.rutgers.edu/rc/response.shtml.

**T**he combined scientific expertise of this "E" team offers a unique view into the scope of the unfolding disaster. All are members of the NIEHS Center for Environmental Health Sciences and, except for Robson, each is also a RWJMS professor of environmental and community medicine. (left to right)

- **Howard M. Kipen, MD, MPH**, director of the occupational health division at EOHSI and acting chair of the department of environmental and community medicine, is an expert in sick building syndrome, occupational pulmonary and hematologic disease, and the effects of exposure to carcinogens including benzene and asbestos. Kipen studied Persian Gulf War health issues for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and conducted research on post-traumatic stress.
- **Michael Gochfeld, MD, PhD**, director of the RWJMS occupational medicine residency training program, has a background in toxicology, neurobehavioral development and heavy metals, including lead, cadmium, mercury, arsenic, chromium and dioxin as well as noise pollution.
- **Paul Lioy, PhD**, acting associate director of EOHSI and head of exposure measurement and assessment division, specializes in human exposure to personal and environmental contaminants, hazardous wastes and photochemical smog.
- **Michael Gallo, PhD**, director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Science (NIEHS) and a founder of the Cancer Institute of New Jersey, is a toxicologist with extensive knowledge of chemical carcinogens.
- **Mark G. Robson, PhD, MPH**, director of the division of environmental and occupational health at SPH, is trained in public health and is an expert in exposure and effects of pesticides. Robson was able to address the issue of rodent control. The last thing New York City needs is a rat population interacting with rescue workers.

**WHO ARE YOU GOING TO CALL?**