

Washington Heights Gas Leak Prompts Evacuation

August 5, 2025

— Categories: General News



Download IPFS

A gas leak in Washington Heights, New York City, led to the evacuation of around 70 residents on Monday morning, prompting an emergency response by fire officials and utility crews.

According to the New York City Fire Department (FDNY), emergency services were alerted to high gas readings near 158th Street and 159th Street on Amsterdam Avenue at

approximately 10:30 a.m. Firefighters responded alongside utility provider Con Edison to investigate the potential hazard.

Gas service to the area was promptly shut down, and Amsterdam Avenue was closed between 156th Street and 159th Street. Crews began digging into the pavement in search of the leak's origin while fire officials ordered evacuations of three residential buildings along the street.

"I smelled the gas in my apartment. It was a heavy smell," said resident Elton Maxwell. "We'd rather be safe than sorry."

By around 2:30 p.m., Con Edison announced that the leak had been identified and repaired. The company confirmed that the gas line had been accidentally struck by a third-party contractor during work in the area.

"Con Edison crews were able to make the repair to the main, which was hit by a third-party contractor," the utility provider stated.

The building at 1989 Amsterdam Avenue, where the leak occurred, was declared safe shortly after the repair. Con Edison also confirmed that no gas outages were reported in the area, and residents were allowed to return to their homes.

No injuries were reported, and emergency services remained on-site for several hours to monitor the situation and ensure the safety of the surrounding area.

While the incident was resolved without casualties, the gas leak raised safety concerns among residents. Situations involving potential gas exposure can pose serious health and safety risks, particularly in densely populated neighborhoods.

Gas leaks are considered a public safety and human rights concern when they affect residents' access to safe housing and disrupt essential services. New York City, like many major urban areas, faces ongoing challenges related to aging infrastructure and third-party construction work, which can inadvertently lead to such incidents.

Authorities have not released the name of the contractor responsible for damaging the gas main, and there is no indication of any formal investigation at this time.

Con Edison continues to remind residents to report the smell of gas immediately and avoid using electrical devices or open flames in the presence of gas odors.

The rapid response by FDNY and utility workers ensured the area was secured with minimal disruption, highlighting the importance of coordinated action during potential urban safety threats.