

## Concrete Findings

*[updated 2009-08-03]*

In [today's](#) New York Times, Will Rashbaum updated last year's [report](#) on the faulty concrete [inspections](#) that seriously undermine building safety in New York City. This especially affects the large construction and may exact long term impacts. On July 29 Crains carried an Associated Press [story](#) on the indictment of a company the test concrete to insure its safety. As a [civic](#) activist I tend to focus more on the activities or lack thereof by the City when it comes to illegal construction of one and two family homes and the many tear downs of home – often through the ruse of an alteration permit – and the erection of a new structure – whether legal or not – clearly inappropriate in the given neighborhood.

The Manhattan grand jury [indictment](#) charged the testing firm with faking results, including at MS216Q and Queensborough's Holocaust Center. There were no suggestions of any collusion between developers, their contractors and the firm. An important issue is – just as the deleterious practice of self-certification enables the bad apples of residential home construction and alterations to cheat and often get by – we see another practice where a private, non-governmental entity passes judgment of a construction practice. Just maybe, this carte blanche approach needs a review. One might think that the problems on the self-certification side might induce City Hall to look at other areas in construction where it relies on non-governmental sources to approve construction processes, in this case concrete.

The problems did not come to light because of retesting or sampling by the City. According to the 2008 Rashbaum [story](#), “The investigation that led to the charges began after monitors hired by the Yankees and by the Port Authority found irregularities in the concrete testing at Yankee Stadium and at ground zero — findings that mirrored those of the authority’s own engineers, officials and people involved in both projects have said.” The same story had City officials planning to retest the concrete in some places where the firm was used, but relying on the high quality of concrete used in the City as a basis to have no cause for alarm. Today's story indicates NYC has failed to retest in almost all of 60 affected building. Hmm.....Well what is the City and its Department of Buildings waiting for? The Public Ought To Know. – *Corey Bearak*