



War on Rats Expands to Schools on the Lower East Side

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During the summer, the city announced a \$32 million program to get rid of rats in three problem neighborhoods, including the Lower East Side/Chinatown. As part of the initiative, those fancy Bigbelly trash cans recently arrived in Seward Park. Now the Mayor's Office has announced a separate \$4 million initiative to reduce the number of rats around public schools.

The money will be used to pay for 18 new trash compacting dumpsters and 569 tilt trucks. The new systems will allow schools to store trash inside the dumpsters rather than on the sidewalk, where plastic bags attract rats. The money will also go towards buying thousands of new trash cans to make sorting regular garbage from recycling and food scraps easier.

Mayoral spokesperson Olivia Lapeyrolerie said, "One in 10 New Yorkers is either a DOE student or teacher, and with providing breakfast, lunch and snacks – schools produce a tremendous amount of waste & food source for rats in the surrounding community.

We expect this nearly \$4 million investment to help us reduce rat activity by 70 percent in the three neighborhoods.”

The program will cover about 25 schools on the Lower East Side (above and below East Houston Street), as well as in Chinatown. Schools in Bedford Stuyvesant/Bushwick and the Grand Concourse area in the Bronx are also part of the initiative.

Here’s a look at the new dumpsters/compactors:



