



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

With Astoria Houses Residents Going On 3 Weeks Without Gas Service And No Timeline For Restoration, Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris Demands NYCHA Restore Service ASAP, Compensate Residents

MICHAEL GIANARIS October 15, 2020

| ISSUE: **NYCHA, PUBLIC HOUSING, ASTORIA HOUSES, CON ED, QUEENS**



ASTORIA – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris called on the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) to immediately address the lack of gas service to 1-04 Astoria Boulevard. In a sharply worded letter to Chair Greg Russ, Senator Gianaris said it was unacceptable that residents in that building had been without gas service since September 23 and that the

agency has no timeline for a restoration of service.

“NYCHA owes New Yorkers answers about this unacceptable situation. Why after three weeks is there still no plan or timeline to restore a basic service to tenants?” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “Impacted NYCHA residents deserve better and should be provided with hot food service and prorated rents for harm caused by this shut off.”

Senator Gianaris first learned of service issues following reports from residents after September 23. He has long fought the beleaguered housing agency on service issues, including fighting for expedited lead remediation. Senator Gianaris' full letter appears below.

October 14, 2020

Greg Russ, Chair and CEO

NYCHA

250 Broadway

New York, New York 10007

Dear Mr. Russ,

I write with deep concern about conditions at 1-04 Astoria Boulevard. This building, part of the Astoria Houses complex you manage, has been without gas service since September 23rd. At a meeting last Thursday, we were informed NYCHA had no specific timeline for full service restoration. This is unacceptable and raises several important questions for which the community deserves answers.

Principally, has a contractor been secured? If so, who, and what is the timeline for that contractor to execute the necessary work? If not, when can a contractor expect to be secured? Knowing a timeline for resolution is critical.

Additionally, the hot plates provided to residents as an alternative are not an acceptable, long-term mitigation strategy for relief to tenants who have been without gas service for weeks. Will hot food service also be provided, and will tenants see their rents pro-rated for the time they were without gas?

Finally, how will your agency communicate your efforts toward a resolution? Non-socially distant meetings in lobbies of buildings are neither a safe nor efficient way to spread public information during the covid-19 pandemic. Please provide a workable, alternative solution for these communications.

The Astoria Houses community deserves to be treated respectfully and have these questions answered in a timely manner. Please let me know your answers within 5 days after receipt of this letter.

Sincerely,

Senator Michael Gianaris

Deputy Majority Leader