

New York Daily News - <http://www.nydailynews.com>**Mayor's 9/11 vow**

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Mayor Bloomberg vowed to examine whether enough is being done for 9/11's forgotten victims after a Daily News editorial revealed yesterday the suffering of 12,000 workers who labored in Ground Zero's toxic cloud.

"We've got to constantly look and see whether we are doing everything that we can," the mayor said in response to The News' call that he take a major leadership role in tackling the mounting health crisis facing those who rushed to help out at the World Trade Center's ruins.

More than 600 firefighters have been forced into retirement, and 25% of active-duty FDNY and Emergency Medical Service forces developed lung-related conditions since the disaster, according to the first of three editorials that appeared in yesterday's News. At least four workers have died after their work at The Pile, and The News tells their stories in today's second editorial.

Bloomberg included the caveat that the city's response will be tied to what it can afford.

"We certainly will do everything we can, consistent with what our resources are, to make sure that this city acts responsibly and recognizes the great sacrifice and the hard work that people made down at the World Trade Center site," he said.

The money matter has infuriated advocates for the 9/11 workers. The News noted yesterday that first responders were lied to about environmental conditions at the site, and federal programs set up to help them were abandoned or don't have enough money.

"These people were there for New York and America. New York and America ought to be there for them," said Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.).

"The federal government has walked away," an angry Patrolmen's Benevolent Association President Patrick Lynch said. The PBA has set up a new registry to monitor the health of cops who worked at Ground Zero.

Marianne Pizzitola, pension benefit coordinator for the uniformed EMS officers union, agreed with The News' demand for leadership and action.

"There's no politician in New York City who's made this his pet project, and that includes the mayor," Pizzitola added.

Yesterday's editorial also called on the mayor to:

- Acknowledge that service at Ground Zero after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks caused fatalities, and use his bully pulpit to take charge of the growing epidemic.
- Devise appropriately funded treatment programs so that all 9/11 responders have access to quality care.
- Review disability and pension benefits afforded to 9/11 responders to eliminate inequities.