



6 COPS GOT BRAIN CANCER

By **CARL CAMPANILE** and **SUSAN EDELMAN**

April 9, 2006 -- An alarming number of 9/11 responders have been stricken with brain cancer - including six NYPD cops, The Post has learned.

At least 11 of the Ground Zero rescue and recovery workers and their families claim in a class-action lawsuit - which includes dozens of other cancer victims - that toxic air and dust caused or triggered the rare, often fatal, brain illness.

Three brain-cancer victims have died, raising the total death toll in a 7,300-plaintiff lawsuit brought by workers and their families to 41, said lead attorney David Worby.

They include Stephen "Rak" Yurek, 46, a Port Authority emergency technician from Bayonne, N.J., who died Dec. 11 after a 16-month illness. He left behind a wife and four children ages 10 to 25.

His widow, Mary Ellen, said he was healthy before his 2004 diagnosis.

"He was never sick a day in his life," she told The Post.

The six NYPD cops with brain cancer range in age from 33 to 49. A 40-year-old cop died in June 2004, after going blind and suffering sinus cancer that spread to his brain, said lawyer Worby.

PBA President Patrick Lynch said the cases confirm his fears about the dangerous conditions at the World Trade Center site.

"We can only imagine their impact on the fragile chemistry of human life," he said. "There is a great deal of sickness and death from that event that is yet to be seen."

Other brain-cancer victims include an FDNY fireman, 55, a female Red Cross social worker, 58, a male Tischman construction worker, 40, a male city transportation worker, 48, and a male city environmental protection worker, 49, Worby said.

"The toxins at the World Trade Center compromised the immune systems and led to a rapid spread of cancer, including to the brain," Worby alleges.

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