



## First responders from 9/11 will get up to \$657 million

By Boonsri Dickinson | Mar 12, 2010 | 0 Comments

**David Worby** told me: “We have won!” He was ecstatic. “I’ve been fighting this battle [for six years]. It’s been torturous,” says Worby. Personal injury lawyer David Worby represents thousands of first responders, who are sick with asthma, respiratory illnesses, and blood cancer.

The first case started with one cop. Then thousands of other people came to Worby, describing similar 9/11 linked health problems. It became clear that people exposed to cancerous toxins got sick — and they weren’t getting better.

The legal battle is paying off. The WTC Captive Insurance has agreed to pay \$657 million to 10,000 rescue workers. But it needs to be approved by a judge and at least 95 percent of the plaintiffs.

The claims would range from a few thousand dollars to a million, depending on the severity of the individual case. Considering the sick cops, firemen, and rescue workers are suffering from life-long illnesses, not everyone agrees \$657 is enough money. *The Guardian* reports:

Groups campaigning on behalf of sick and injured rescue and recovery workers point out that 70,000 people were involved in the Ground Zero clear up, spending hours engulfed in a toxic soup of pollutants, yet only 10,000 would be covered by the settlement.

Claire Calladine, who runs 9/11 Health Now, said the average compensation of \$65,700 was “ludicrous when you consider that many of the plaintiffs’ health is in ruins, with a large percentage completely disabled, and with cancers and other serious diseases also surging.”

In 2007, I remember standing at Ground Zero listening to a press conference that was held to shed light on the growing number of illnesses caused by 9/11. Thousands of first responders were falling ill. But if the same were true for people who were living and working downtown, then the number could easily climb to 300,000 New Yorkers.

Worby told *Discover magazine* in *The 9/11 Cover-Up*:

“I started this suit on behalf of one cop that got sick,” Worby says of his class-action lawsuit filed in 2004. “Nobody would touch the case with a 10-foot pole because it was considered unpatriotic to say anything against the cleanup or the EPA. We have come a long way. They once called the 9/11 cough a badge of honor.



Now they know that the whole thing is a catastrophic government disaster.”

And yes, the two million tons of dust (glass, lead, and carcinogens, asbestos, and cement) was a health hazard. Our lungs can't handle that heavy concentration of dust in the air. As reported in *Discover magazine*: “First the 9/11 cough and mental health problems caught the attention of local doctors. Then chronic respiratory and gastrointestinal conditions began to surface.... the emergence of rare blood cancers among 9/11 responders.”

The WTC Health Registry is tracking the health impacts of the WTC dust. Up to 40,000 adults have been diagnosed with asthma 5 to 6 years later and up to 88,600 adults have suffered from post-traumatic stress symptoms 5 to 6 years after 9/11. But no one will know for sure what the long term health effects of 9/11 are.

Now, everyone assumes it's safe to work and live downtown. But is it?

Image: NEJM

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## Boonsri Dickinson

Boonsri Dickinson is a science journalist, blogger, and producer based in New York City. She's a runner, explorer, and traveler. Her work has appeared in Discover magazine, The Huffington Post, Forbes, Nature Biotech, Technewsdaily.com, Techstartups.com and AOL. Boonsri graduated from the University of Florida with a degree in chemical engineering and wanted to stay in school as long as possible, so she attended the University of Colorado at Boulder. There, she received a master's in chemical engineering and immediately moved to New York for its media scene. Follow her on Twitter.

## Boonsri Dickinson

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