

New York firefighters suffer permanent lung damage from 9/11

NEW YORK (PAI) — New York's unionized firefighters who rushed to the World Trade Center in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks — and who breathed in the toxic fumes and particles from the collapse of the destroyed Twin Towers — have suffered permanent and significant lung damage, results from a long-term study say.

The data, published April 7 in the New England Journal of Medicine, covered 92 percent of the firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) who entered the Trade Center. It showed — after seven years of testing 11,868 firefighters and 2,086 EMTs — permanent declines in breathing capacity averaging 13 percent for firefighters and 11 percent for EMTs, compared to data for the general population.

The largest declines were suffered by firefighters who got to "The Pile" in the first hours after the Trade Center collapsed. The declines were so great, one medical writer pointed out, that if

the affected firefighters took the New York Fire Department's mandatory physical test of lung capacity now, the average applicant would flunk.

Firefighters tested were those who survived the destruction of the Trade Center, and went to work on the remains, from Sept. 11-24, 2001. The al-Qaeda terrorist attack killed 343 members of Fire Fighters Locals 94 and 854, among 2,751 total victims of the Twin Towers' collapse.

"Among workers who had never smoked, the average total decline" in lung capacity for each breath "was 592 milliliters (ml) for firefighters and 504 ml for emergency medical service workers," the physicians running the study reported.

"After the initial decline in the first year among lifelong nonsmokers, adjusted lung capacity continued to decline, with an annualized rate of decline during the six years between 2002 and 2008 of 26 ml per year. For EMS workers who never smoked, the adjusted

lung capacity continued to decline by an average of 40 ml year, a value that was significantly higher than that for firefighters. We found similar results among workers who had histories as smokers."

The federal government set up the long-term study of the firefighters and EMTs who responded to the attack, many of whom have had to retire on disability due to high incidence of lung diseases, unusual cancers and other diseases. The study noted the firefighters and EMTs were "exposed to a dense, persistent dust cloud of pulverized building materials and chemical by-products of combustion or pyrolysis."

IAFF lists benzene, asbestos and dioxin — along with particulates and corrosive dust — as among the hazards those first responders faced, and inhaled. The medical study notes many of the first responders did not get adequate protective breathing equipment. Use of pulmonary masks "was minimal during the first week" of work at the WTC site, the researchers noted.

"FDNY rescue workers who responded to the World Trade Center site during collapse or the subsequent 10-month rescue-and-recovery operations had substantial loss in pulmonary function during the first year after the event, more than 12 times the annual age-associated rate. The largest decline was observed among workers who arrived at the site on the morning of 9/11," the researchers reported.

By contrast, they added, normal firefighters suffer lessened lung capacity from smoke inhalation, even when they wear respirators. But the damage

is much less (50 ml-130 ml) and "full recovery occurred within days or weeks." The New York firefighters have yet to recover and probably never will, the study reports.

The IAFF has made gaining a permanent treatment program for its members who suffered the after-effects of the collapse a top legislative goal. It had to fight the Bush Administration for the funds, including funding for the long-term study whose results appeared in the journal. The Obama Administration has been more sympathetic to the IAFF's cause.

"More than eight years after the at-

tacks, persistent health problems — including respiratory, gastrointestinal and mental health conditions — continue to be documented among the rescue and recovery workers," a fact sheet distributed at the union's legislative conference says.

"Given the serious health problems experienced by World Trade Center responders, continued funding for existing monitoring and treatment programs must be assured," IAFF added. That can come not through annual money bills, but from a new, dedicated entitlement program limited to those first responders, the union says.

Stimulus money topic of LERA breakfast

"Is There Stimulus Money for You?" is the topic of discussion at the May 4 breakfast program sponsored by the Oregon chapter of the Labor Employment Relations Association.

Andrew McGough, executive director of Worksystems, Inc. will be joined by Laura Roberts and Shalee Hodgeson of Oregon's WorkSource agency, in a panel looking at the availability of funds for training and skills enhancement for employees. They will be explaining how stimulus money was spent and how to access funds through federal and state job training grants.

The breakfast begins at 7:30 a.m., Tuesday, May 4, at Clackamas Community College in Wilsonville, 29353 Town Center Loop East. Cost is \$25 for LERA members and \$35 for non-members. Annual membership to LERA is \$40.

For more information, contact Jim Bailey at baileyarbit@gmail.com or visit www.oregonlera.com.

FREE

BARGAIN COUNTER

Free ads to subscribers

DEADLINE: Friday prior to publication

Published 1st and 3rd Fridays

Send to:
NW Labor Press, PO Box 13150,
Portland, OR 97213

Classified ads MUST include area code on all phone numbers or they will not be published

- 15 words or less
- Include address label from front page and telephone number
- Sorry, we cannot accept ads over the telephone
- No commercial or business ads
- 1 ad per issue
- Type or print legibly

AUTOMOTIVE

'47 MAROON FORD 4-door, totally restored to original condition, \$16,000, Mike. 503-317-6952 or csmmpayne@aol.com for a picture
TIRE CHAINS, fits 12.50x15-12.50x16.50. new, never used. \$50 360-213-9540
'78 MERCURY COUGAR Brougham, 351, V8, air, new tires, yellow w/brown vinyl top & interior, 49,966 miles, \$2,500. 503-693-7526
'47 CHEVY STYLEMASTER 4 door, needs restored, \$2,000. 503-289-0066 (Ed)
'94 HONDA ACCORD EX, 5 spd manual, 1 owner, all service records, 316K, 30 mpg, new tags, \$975. 971-235-3365

COLLECTOR PAYS cash for older toys, oil paintings, art pottery, taxco silver and unique items. 503-703-5952
FULL SIZE camper, Chevy short, wide box. 503-826-0376

FOR THE HOME

SEALY CROWN Jewel king size mattress, dual pillow-top, always had a cover on and in excellent condition - \$75. 503-254-5659

SPORTING GOODS

19' BLUE WATER CUTTY overnigher V6, dual batteries, depth finder, full top, porta potty, VHF, AM/FM, \$7,000. 503-659-3297
RUGER NO. 1 light sporter 1-A, 30-06 w/rings, \$675; Remington 760, 30-06 4x Lyman Sling, \$260. 503-593-9242
'68 HONDA TRAIL 90, low/high, windshield & mirrors, new tires & tubes, ex cond, \$1,200 OBO; 2 Japanese rifles, \$50 each. 503-307-3934
CROSSMAN 22 cal pellet pistol, model #116 (1960), 5.5" barrel, 2 rechargeable co2 cylinders, pellets and targets, ex cond, \$195. 503-236-1329
'91 ALPHA FIFTH-wheel, 33-foot, large slide, many extras, excellent cond, \$7,950. 360-687-2644
CAVEMAN CAMPER, 8-foot, \$200 or trade? 541-544-2030
POOL TABLE, 8-foot Olhausen, mint condition, all accessories, 5 expert cues, \$1,000. 503-644-5049
TRAVEL TRAILER, 2007 32' Forest River, NW package, like new, slide out, awning, too much to list, must see. 503-881-2595

MISCELLANEOUS

FIREWOOD, green fir down about 1 month, 16" and split, about 2 cords (not measured yet) \$150/cord. Battle Ground 360-687-0695
IBANEZ MASA acoustic/electric guitar, Model # sx72tbc1201 w/soft case, looks & plays well, 175 obo. 503-760-8696
TABLE SAW, Powermatic 5hp 3 phase, #66-TA, 74" table, excellent condition, \$1,495. 503-643-6897 (Dale)
LAYING HENS, 1 yr. old, \$10 each. 503-630-4647

HOUSING

LINCOLN CITY vacation rental, 3 br, 2 ba. \$90/night, sleeps 8. 2 blks from beach, 4 blks from casino. 503-804-7976
MOSIER HOME/full basement, 3 bd, 2250 sf, river view, large lot, RV parking, \$375K. 541-300-0673
LOT-WHEELER, Ore., 50x100, trees, private, bay view, buildable, walk to dock, shopping, restaurants, reduced \$20k, \$45,000. 503-708-6869
ROCKAWAY ocean front 503-777-5076
<http://home.comcast.net/~rockaway.beach>
5 bdrms, 2 ba, call for summer rentals!

WANTED

JUNK CARS, removal of unwanted cars and pickups. 503-314-8600
BUY 1996 FORD LWB, dual tanks, nice cond, no rust, need box only, black 503-949-9314
OLD HYDRAULIC water rams 503-829-4229
MOTORCYCLES, quads, Volkswagens, cash paid. 503-880-8183
OLD WOODWORKING tools, planes, levels, chisels, handsaws, slicks, adzes, wrenches, folding rulers, leather tools, tool chests. 503-659-0009

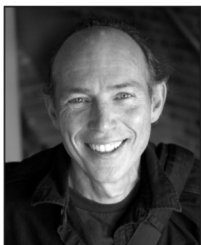
Elizabeth M. Bedsole, LMT

Lic. #16064
...massage for every body...
(503) 960-3631

10% discount for all union members



James Coon



Raymond Thomas



Cynthia Newton



Kimberly Tucker



Chris Frost

The team at **SWANSON, THOMAS & COON** can help you:

Know Your Rights

If your employer forces you to work in dangerous work conditions, you can make a **CONFIDENTIAL** report to OSHA by calling (800) 922-2689

Workers Compensation

Construction Injuries

Death Claims

Personal Injury/Product Liability

Social Security Disability

Occupational Disease/Mesothelioma

Call us today at **503-228-5222**

Straight answers. No cost for consultation.

SWANSON, THOMAS & COON ATTORNEYS AT LAW
820 S.W. Second Avenue, Suite 200
Portland, Oregon 97204
www.stc-law.com

