

Verizon Retirees Sickened from 9-11 Related Illness & Cancers Are Eligible for Federal Fund

Retired FDNY Chief to Speak at Annual Member Meeting- May 2

When New York City and the World Trade Center were attacked on September 11, 2001, a staggering 2,606 souls were lost, as over 25,000 other innocents were evacuated from the towers. As the buildings collapsed, falling steel beams also pierced the exterior of the Verizon Building at 140 West Street, causing significant damage and filling the interior with toxic dust and debris.

Our former employer, the attacks and the Verizon workforce will forever be connected. Now two advocates representing over 10,000 of New York City's first responders and lower Manhattan workers and residents are shining a brighter spotlight on the toxic and dangerous role Verizon workers were placed in, as they restored the city's communications capabilities.

"America recognizes that it wasn't just the FDNY and NYPD on the front lines following the 9/11 attacks in New York City. Think about the critical role of Verizon and ConEd workers who



Retired FDNY Chief Richard Alles will discuss the 9/11 Zadroga Victims Compensation Fund and how it relates to Verizon retirees and workers and their rights to medical and financial protections.

restored communications and power to a city on its knees at the time," said Attorney Michael Barasch, whose firm Barasch McGarry P.C. was then and still is only two blocks from the attack site.

Barasch, together with recently retired FDNY Chief Richard Alles have

been leading the charge for firefighters, police, construction, sanitation, transit, utility workers, volunteers and locals who answered the call to help, but wound up ingesting a toxic stew that today doctors have linked to 70 different types of cancers and other diseases. Since 9-11, more than 1,000 have died from exposure and over 37,000 more have been diagnosed with a number of cancers, pulmonary disease and other illnesses.

The U.S. Department of Justice has extended the 9/11 Zadroga Victims Compensation Fund (VCF) registration deadline for those who develop cancer and other specific diseases to be protected. The VCF was extended by Congress, with a registration deadline of December 2020.

The Association has invited Mr. Alles to speak at our 2017 Association membership meeting on May 2 in Atlantic City, New Jersey, where he will explain the VCF as it relates to Verizon retirees and workers and their rights to medical and financial protections. Chief Alles led government affairs for the FDNY's Uniformed Fire Officers Association (UFOA) negotiating the VCF legislation and its reauthorization. For both the FDNY Chief and Barasch, this has been a 15-year fight for justice.

Working closely with the federal Special Master of the VCF, Mr. Barasch's firm has secured over \$1 billion for those sickened by the aftermath of the attacks. The fund has \$7.3 billion set aside to aid affected individuals including those working to restore services in and around downtown Manhattan and the Verizon building.

(Continued to page 6)



courtesy of wikimedia commons

Verizon headquarters at 140 West Street in Manhattan, adjacent to the World Trade Center following the 9/11 attacks.

Verizon Retirees Sickened from 9-11

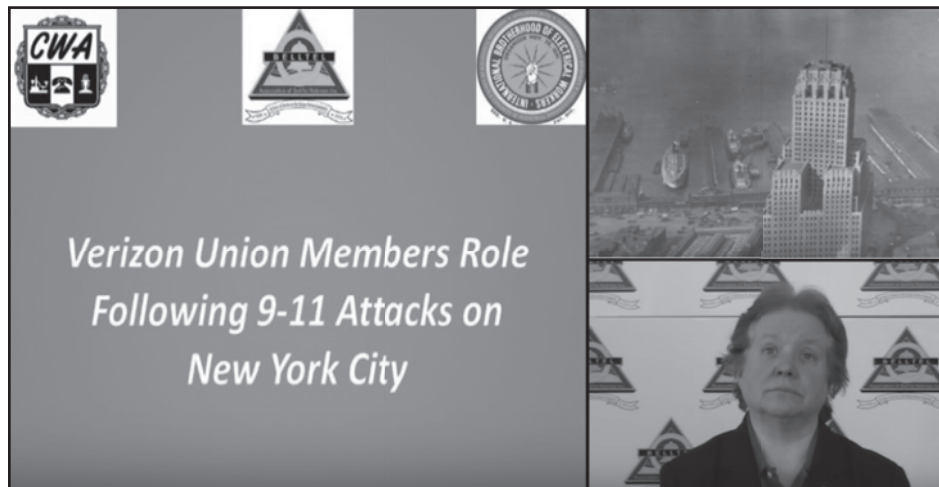
(Continued from page 5)

"Everyone at or near the WTC site were all breathing in these toxins," said Chief Alles. "We all knew the air was not healthy, many of us developed respiratory problems and began spitting up chunks of debris from the toxic air, but 9-11 was a national emergency and we all worked together to show the terrorists that they could not take America or our city down. But now those first responders I worked alongside are sick, many dying and their families need help."

It's not too late to apply if you've been diagnosed with cancer or one of the other covered diseases within the last 10 years.

Verizon employees led the restoration, first of New York City's emergency communications systems and then for a wider need that allowed some degree of normalcy to return, including the reopening of our nation's financial markets. Repair work to power and communications infrastructure was job #1. Verizon employees worked tirelessly, to restore service south of Canal Street, as underground fires raged for 9-months.

Due to their role and exposure, Verizon retirees and workers who have not done so and have cancer or other identified maladies can now register for VCF protections. For those with cancer,



In 2016, the Association produced a video where our retirees discussed their important role restoring communications after the 9/11 attacks on New York.

compensation ranges from \$100,000 to \$250,000 plus access to permanent health monitoring services. Other diseases covered include: interstitial lung diseases, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and WTC-related traumatic injuries.

As the word gets out more eligible victims are stepping forward. Just in the abbreviated week between Christmas and New Year's, Barasch's firm helped 26 new people gain access to the VCF's protections.

"There are people out there who:
1) may still not

realize they are sick and: 2) do not realize they are eligible for this financial relief. It's really so important that people are made aware that this compensation fund is there to help ease the medical and financial burden on their families. Our goal is to inform Verizon retirees and its active workforce, so no one has to bear that burden alone," said Mr. Barasch.

Be A Part of Our 2017 Annual Journal

This year the Association of BellTel Retirees will be publishing and distributing a 2017 annual member meeting journal to those participating in the 21st annual gathering in Atlantic City.

We will be honoring our founders C. William Jones and Robert Rehm as our Men of the Year. Take out an ad and send them your congratulatory wishes.

If you want to add a message into the souvenir journal please contact the Association at 1-800-261-9222 or email at association@belltelretirees.org.

All ads and payment are due March 31, 2017.

Ad rates and sizes include:

Full page: \$175 • Half page: \$100

Quarter page: \$50

Booster- \$10 per line to send a personal message. And more ad options are available, ranging up to gold page level.



courtesy of wikipedia commons

Verizon headquarters, 140 West Street, NYC after 9-11 attacks.