

The number of front line emergency service workers suffering cancer after coming to the aid of those hit during the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York City has spiked to dramatic levels.

Around 3,700 firefighters, police and other first responders have reported suffering cancers, certified by the US government as 9/11 related.



A firefighter rests at ground zero after the World Trade Centre collapse. *Photo: Getty*

The toll also includes 467 downtown workers and residents, according to *Sputnik News*.

Some 109 New York Fire Department (FDNY) workers have died from Ground-Zero linked illnesses.

Chief medical officer for the FDNY, Dr David Prezant, said that more than 2,100 firefighters have retired, mostly due to lung disease and cancer since 9/11.

“Due to the physical nature of their jobs, these illnesses have had a tremendous impact on our membership and their families,” he said in a statement obtained by the *New York Post*.

Research into the toxic effect on those who worked at ground-zero has found thyroid, colon, prostate and blood cancers are more prevalent in 9/11 FDNY members, than those who didn't serve there.

FDNY deputy chief Thomas Riley was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and a tumour formed behind his eye.

On 9/11, Mr Riley dug survivors from the rubble of ground-zero until 3am with his fellow FDNY members.

Mr Riley has lobbied the US government to extend the 9/11 Victim Compensation fund for Ground Zero responders past its expiration date of October 2016.

The 58-year-old married father-of-three will need lifetime check-ups.

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