

BP Tells Cleanup Workers They'll Be Fired If They Wear Respirators

By [Washington's Blog](#)

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As I [noted](#) on May 19th, BP has been telling cleanup workers that they don't need to wear respirators or other protective gear.

As Jerrold Nadler, the New York congressman whose district includes the World Trade Center, [said](#) today:

We're repeating the same catastrophe in the Gulf. You see pictures of people wearing regular clothes who are wading in and scooping oil off the water. Hundreds, maybe thousands of people, are going to get sick unnecessarily.

More egregious still, sources on the ground say that BP is telling cleanup workers that they will be fired if they wear respirators:

Why?

Because – as part of their PR campaign – BP is doing everything it can to prevent dramatic pictures or headlines regarding the oil spill.

For example, BP has been [keeping reporters out of areas hardest hit by the oil](#) (and see [this](#), [this](#), [this](#) and [this](#)) and [threatening to arrest them](#) if they try to take pictures, [hiding dead birds and other sealife](#), and [using dispersants](#) to break up the thick plumes of oil. Indeed, attorney and environmental advocate Monique Harden [says](#) that BP is “running the Gulf region like a prison warden”.

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