

# 3 die in chemical leak

## B'klyn factory accident also hurts cops & paramedics



**VICTIM OF CHEMICAL LEAK** is taken from Brooklyn factory last night.

GEORGE MITCHELL

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Three men were killed, one seriously injured and almost two dozen cops and medical technicians burned by a poisonous, cancer-causing chemical that leaked inside a Brooklyn factory last night.

The cops and ambulance technicians were exposed to the chemical Xylene, a toxic industrial solvent, after responding to a report of a burglary, police said.

It turned out there was no burglary. Workers had been cleaning a vat, police said, when one of them fell in and the others were overcome by the fumes as they tried to rescue him.

When the cops got to the Ever New Fence Co. at 471 20th St., just across the street from Greenwood Cemetery near Park Slope, at 8:26 p.m., they found one dead man and his co-workers unconscious inside the one-story building.

### Rescuers needed aid

After pulling the victims out, 17 cops and six ambulance technicians needed treatment for exposure to the fumes.

"Their skin was burning and blistering," said Emergency Medical Service spokesman John Kilcooley. "We had units on the scene treating them immediately with sterile water and bandages."

### Two later died

The men found unconscious in the plant were taken to nearby Methodist Hospital, where two died. The hospital said one man was in "very serious" condition.

The cops, from the Fourth Ave. stationhouse and Emergency Service Unit, and exposed EMS technicians were taken to Long Island College Hospital and Lutheran Medical Center for further treatment and showers to wash off any remaining traces of the chemical, which is considered a potent carcinogen.

Police Commissioner Benjamin Ward rushed to Long Island College Hospital, where, after visiting the injured cops, he said only that three "were uncomfortable" from the exposure.

Police and the Fire Department's hazardous materials (Hazmat) unit cordoned off the block from Eighth Ave. to Prospect Park West.

City Environmental Protection Commissioner Harvey Schultz also rushed to the scene of the accident.