In The Press: Gas Shortages; Hospital Evacuations Examined

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Gas Shortages As Recovery Continues

The slow, heart-wrenching reveal of Hurricane Sandy's devastating impact on the city continued yesterday.

So far, there were 40 confirmed deaths in the city related to Sandy, according to The New York Times . The bodies of two young boys, who had been swept from their mother's arms during flooding on Staten Island, were among those found yesterday.

A half-million residents were still without power in their homes , though city officials were saying that electricity likely would be restored in lower Manhattan by Saturday.

And residents relying on gas-powered generators found no relief at the pumps , where fuel was running short at stations and long lines left many frustrated. Gas stations also reported their own power problems.

Meanwhile, the mass transit system was brought to piecemeal life yesterday, with some subway lines and commuter rail restored. However, with no subway service in lower Manhattan because of continued power outages, people in Queens and Brooklyn were forced to use bridge crossings, shuttle buses, bikes and to carpool. Streetsblog found that the city's new bike infrastructure was "really proving its worth."

The storm spilled into national politics as well. Mayor Michael Bloomberg, citing his belief that the storm was in part the result of climate change, endorsed Barack Obama for a second term,

saying the president was most likely to implement policies to address global warming.

The Times and ProPublica examined the decision to not require evacuations of critical hospitals in low-lying areas that ended up flooding and with their backup generators failing. Officials defended the decision, pointing out that no patient had died in "a storm-related incident" as of yesterday. "Outcomes matter," State Health Commissioner Dr. Nirav R. Shah told ProPublica.
"Outcomes speak louder than anything else."

Officials also defended the decision not to call off the New York City Marathon , even though thousands were still without power and the transit system had only been partially restored. The New York Post
reported
that three diesel generators able to produce 800 kilowatts of electricity â€" enough to power 400 homes â€" were being operated 24/7 in Central Park for the race.

In the Press...

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