



## Former VP Gore Helps Paint A 'Cool' New Roof For LIC YMCA

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Reprinted: The Queens Gazette



**Photo Vinny DuPre L. to r.: President and CEO of YMCA of Greater New York Jack Lund, Chief Service Officer Diahann Billings-Burford, former Vice President Al Gore, Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, and Con Edison Chairman Kevin Burke at work painting.**

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and former Vice President Al Gore visited the rooftop of the Long Island City YMCA on Thursday, September 24 to literally paint the town white to commence the start of NYC Cool Roofs, a partnership between the City and the non-profit Community Environmental Center, with the objective of keeping the city cool during the hot summers.

The project was one of many initiatives promoted during Climate Week NYC, which began on September 20th, 2009, seeking to convene government and business leaders to create dialogue on how to better the environment, to coincide with the annual gathering of the international community for the UN General Assembly. It also takes place seventy days before the UN Climate Change Conference, which takes place in Copenhagen,

and seeks to create an international protocol to countries to resolve the issue of climate.

"It's a simple concept- anyone who has ever gotten dressed in the summer knows it: light-colored surfaces absorb less heat than darker surfaces do," said Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Since this is Climate Week in New York City, which focuses on promoting sources of alternative energy and the reduction of carbon emissions, the Mayor said that "white is the new green".

As most urban areas are covered by impermeable pavement, which absorbs the sun's heat, producing what is known as the Urban Heat Island Effect, in which urban areas see a 5-7 degree increase in overall temperature in comparison to more rural settings. By painting rooftops with a white paint, the surfaces will reflect, rather than absorb heat, decreasing the average summer temperature of the city overall by one degree, with savings in energy costs estimated at \$100 million dollars. The plan is one of many environmental programs

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the city is taking in order to shrink the emission of greenhouse gases by 20 percent by the year 2030.

NYC Service is a civic service organization that was launched last April, in the aftermath of President Barack Obama's election, as a recurring theme of his campaign to encourage citizens to make an impact in their local communities by volunteering. "Cities must continue to drive the initiative in climate change," said Mayor Bloomberg, warning that a failure to address our environmental problems will only ensure "that we won't have a future".

Vice President Gore furthermore took the opportunity to praise the Bloomberg's leadership as Mayor "of the capital city of the world", in both addressing and attempting to resolve the dilemma of climate change as a gallant example "that the issue of solving the climate crisis goes beyond party politics and party labels". When asked if he was endorsing Bloomberg as a candidate in the mayoral election for a third-term, Gore remained nonchalant, stating that those in executive positions, particularly mayors, have been better at addressing the issue than the United States Congress.

While the benefits to both the environment and the economy were center stage, the commitment to strengthening local communities and passing on responsibility to the next generation also took precedent. According to the Pew Center on Global Climate Change, approximately 80 percent of children ages 8-14 believe that they have the ability to stop global warming, but more than half are irresolute as to what steps they can take to make an impact.

"As the owner and operator of more than 1.3 million square feet of property throughout the five boroughs, we're in full support of the Mayor's initiatives to make New York a more environmentally responsible city," said Jack Lund, president and CEO of the YMCA of Greater New York. He also added that the initiatives are a beneficial in giving the local youth a "social conscious" in taking a productive role to address the issues that concern their community. According to Mayor Bloomberg, for a building like the L.I.C. YMCA, the benefits of a white roof could cut heating costs in half, while also allowing heating and cooling appliances to last 5-10 years longer.

Whether it is cutting energy costs, helping the environment or advocating volunteerism, both men strove to make one message clear: An investment in our environment, is an investment for all.