

N.Y. / Region

City Room



October 12, 2010, 1:43 pm

Car Wash to Pay Workers \$1.7 Million in Owed Wages

By [ANDY NEWMAN](#)

A car wash in Upper Manhattan agreed to pay its employees more than \$1.7 million for five years worth of underpaid wages, under a settlement announced Tuesday by the state Labor Department.

The car wash, [Broadway Bridge Wash & Lube](#) at Broadway and 220th Street, routinely cheated its workers, who usually worked 72 hours a week, out of overtime wages and tips from 2003 to 2008, the Labor Department said. Some earned as little as \$3.75 an hour, which was \$3 below minimum wage at the time, the department said.

Broadway Bridge also agreed to pay \$215,000 in penalties to the Labor Department. The settlement stemmed from a statewide investigation of car washes that the Labor Department undertook in 2008. It found that in New York City, as many as 78 percent of car washes violated minimum-wage and overtime laws. A call to the operators of Broadway Bridge — David Winter, Ehud Cafri and Ori Apple — was not immediately returned.

[Highlights](#), [Labor](#), [Broadway Bridge Wash & Lube](#), [minimum wage](#), [state labor department](#), [wage theft](#)

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22 Comments

1. 1. October 12, 2010 1:54 pm [Link](#)

72 hours a week!?! That's inhumane.

— *Perry Brown*

2. 2. October 12, 2010 2:28 pm [Link](#)

Majority of these workers are immigrants hence the ridiculous hours. It's about time. I wonder how much of the tip money the workers really get.

— *LR*

3. 3. October 12, 2010 2:29 pm [Link](#)

What a curse! In communism, they don't live and they don't let you live. In capitalism, they live but they don't let you live. Is there any way where we both can live?

— *John*

4. 4. October 12, 2010 2:34 pm [Link](#)

Sounds like something Wal-Mart would do.

— *USA*

5. 5. October 12, 2010 2:44 pm [Link](#)

If someone agrees to work at an agreed upon price what is the problem?

72 hours a week, ask any first year Banking associate or high level attorney in manhattan. They all work those hours.

The plaintiff attorney just made 400,000 dollars by taking it away from the small business owner. Likely someone that never even went to college but achieved the american dream of owning his own car was. Thats what this headline should say. This country is lost.

— *jb*

6. 6. October 12, 2010 2:51 pm [Link](#)

Come to America from a place where there are no jobs to be had and those that can be had pay a dollar a day. Get a job at a salary that would qualify you as upper class in your native land. Insert one lawyer(s) who has found out/been given info that overtime was not paid. Settle suit for \$1.7 million of which half ends up in lawyers pocket. What a country! Is it any wonder people are tripping over themselves trying to enter any way possible.

— Don

7. 7. October 12, 2010 2:59 pm [Link](#)

Did anyone else see jb's comment? Sure what's wrong with "an agreed upon price". Jb, since you realize this country is lost how about you lead by example? I need someone to clean the windows from outside from 80th floor here. So, lets agree on \$3.00 an hour and work at it 72 hours straight. Lets show the world what kind of a patriot you are buddy!

— *jb's nightmare*

8. 8. October 12, 2010 3:05 pm [Link](#)

Comment #5 is insensitive, foolish and shows that the writer never did a hard days work in his or her life. Let the writer work 72 hours a week for sub-minimum wages and then see how that person feels about the business owner.

— *Commack Kid*

9. 9. October 12, 2010 3:08 pm [Link](#)

JB said – 72 hours a week, ask any first year Banking associate or high level attorney in manhattan. They all work those hours.

According to the article – Some earned as little as \$3.75 an hour, which was \$3 below minimum wage at the time, the department said.

Let the workers switch places and compensation and see what happens

— *charls grashow*

10. 10. October 12, 2010 3:08 pm [Link](#)

I agree with #2. Perhaps if the employer were forced to use Department of Homeland Security's [system, these people would have never been hired in the first place.](#)

— *bluerain*

11. 11. October 12, 2010 3:14 pm [Link](#)

No. 5 makes a valid point about attorney fees—sometimes legal costs seem disproportionate to the benefit reaped by plaintiffs and the payment comes from a small business owner—but it does not apply here. The NYS Labor Dept. sued, not a private

attorney or law firm which may collect a one-third contingency fee. According to the article, \$1.7 mil goes to the workers and \$215k to the State.

— *Avery Steinberg*

12. 12. October 12, 2010 3:16 pm [Link](#)

jb #5: How can you compare the salary of a banker or an attorney to the wages of a car wash worker? Also, this was not work of a greedy plaintiff's attorney, the article clearly states that the State Labor Department brought the action.

— *Tom G*

13. 13. October 12, 2010 3:28 pm [Link](#)

Oh, #5, the banker and lawyer agreed to work those hours. At a desk job. In a cushy office. And how much do they get paid and what are the bennies and perks, remind me again. My heart bleeds red borscht for them. If someone agrees to the price because he needs a job and doesn't have a choice, that is exploitation.

#3: Is there any way we both can live? Unfortunately you will have to change human nature for the better. "Goe and catch a falling star,/Get with child a mandrake root."

— *ACW*

14. 14. October 12, 2010 3:31 pm [Link](#)

I really enjoy #5's comment. Seems unfair to have allowed these \$3.75/hr workers to have had an attorney. What is wrong with paying people less so that you can have a bigger car. Wall St does it; industry does it; Chainsaw Charlie did it and became famous. It is what America represents. To paraphrase famous lady: Let the little people go off and fight our wars.

— *charles*

15. 15. October 12, 2010 3:42 pm [Link](#)

JB: They didn't agree to work for that price, because that price was illegal. They agreed to work for the minimum wages that are mandated as legal: Minimum wage + overtime + pooled tips. (Actually, there's an allowance for workers who get tips, so the employer can actually pay somewhat less than minimum wage.)

Do you really want to live in a society where workers make far less money than it costs to live? How stable do you think such a society would be? That's how you create the worst slums and when you create the worst slums, you create anger, filth and danger, which affects everybody. Do you really want the U.S. to be like the worst parts of the third world? Because that's what you would get if you permitted employers to exploit their employees.

— Marty

16. 16. October 12, 2010 4:00 pm [Link](#)

Sing a song of Carwash
Of Workers underpaid,
Owners offer eyewash
On cheating they displayed.

Now they're hit with backpay,
Wish that it was more,
Show the ones that games play,
What they've got in store.

— Larry Eisenberg

17. 17. October 12, 2010 4:09 pm [Link](#)

JB – the American Dream is NOT running a business by ignoring the law of the land and profiting by the exploitation and overwork of others. Shame on you for thinking that's something to aspire to.

— SKV

18. 18. October 12, 2010 4:18 pm [Link](#)

Most of the workers in the car washes are from Latin American countries ,some are legal some are not, the common denominator is that they are being exploited so are the landscapers ,concrete and masonry workers and the office cleaners. The owners who are running these businesses are making a fortune on the backs of the workers they exploit and the government is being cheated out of taxes that are not paid by these “Hidden” workers.

— JAMES FM

19. 19. October 12, 2010 4:34 pm [Link](#)

Why did it take five years to nail these unabashed exploiters of the desperately, unemployed people!! 1.7 MILLION DOLLARS IN BACK PAY. Get a grip Broadway Bridge Car Wash.

— Eddierod

20. 20. October 12, 2010 8:11 pm [Link](#)

JB (#5) is smoking what Ayn Rand was smoking. I'd rather live in a world where the meak and the weak are not condemned to live in poverty just because some people think that preservation of the principle of absolute freedom of contract is more important than the right of others to eat.

— *TJHillgardner*

21. 21. October 12, 2010 10:53 pm [Link](#)

Minimum wage for a person in NYC that earns tip on the regular bases is \$4.25, what they fought for was the Overtime that was not payed at double wage. The only thing the owner did wrong was that he didnt pay overtime wages. bartenders and waitresses make \$4.25

— *Henry*

22. 22. October 13, 2010 6:35 am [Link](#)

the article is very interesting

— *Costina*