

## DAILY NEWS

### City officials vow to help Bronx shops razed by Bainbridge Ave. fire

By Mark Lebetkin and Jane H. Furse  
NY Daily News  
Monday, November 2, 2009

The complete and utter devastation wreaked by a massive blaze that tore through 14 mom-and-pop stores in the Bronx is shown starkly in this picture.

City officials vowed Sunday to help the store owners after Saturday's five-alarm blaze on Bainbridge Ave. in Norwood, as investigators hunt for what caused it.

Officials with the emergency response unit of the Department of Small Business Services met with the owners, who were just about to reopen their doors after rebuilding from an April blaze.

"Our team is helping these businesses obtain copies of permits/licenses consumed by the fire, expedite [Fire Department] reports required for insurance claims as well as connecting them to other N.Y.C. Business Solutions services," said spokeswoman Laura Postiglione.

"It's extremely important to get them open again as quickly as possible," said John DeSio, spokesman for Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz's office.

Neighbors who depended on the businesses for work and to shop are shell-shocked.

"It breaks my heart. These stores have been here since I was born," said Anita Cabret, 69. "It may not seem like a lot, but for seniors, it's devastating."

Nina Arencibia, a single mother who lives near E. 204th St., had been talking to two business owners about a part-time job: "I was going to start working two days here and two days there."

"This neighborhood won't stay the same without these stores. We lost so much, and it affects so many people," said Brenda Braxton, who also lives nearby.