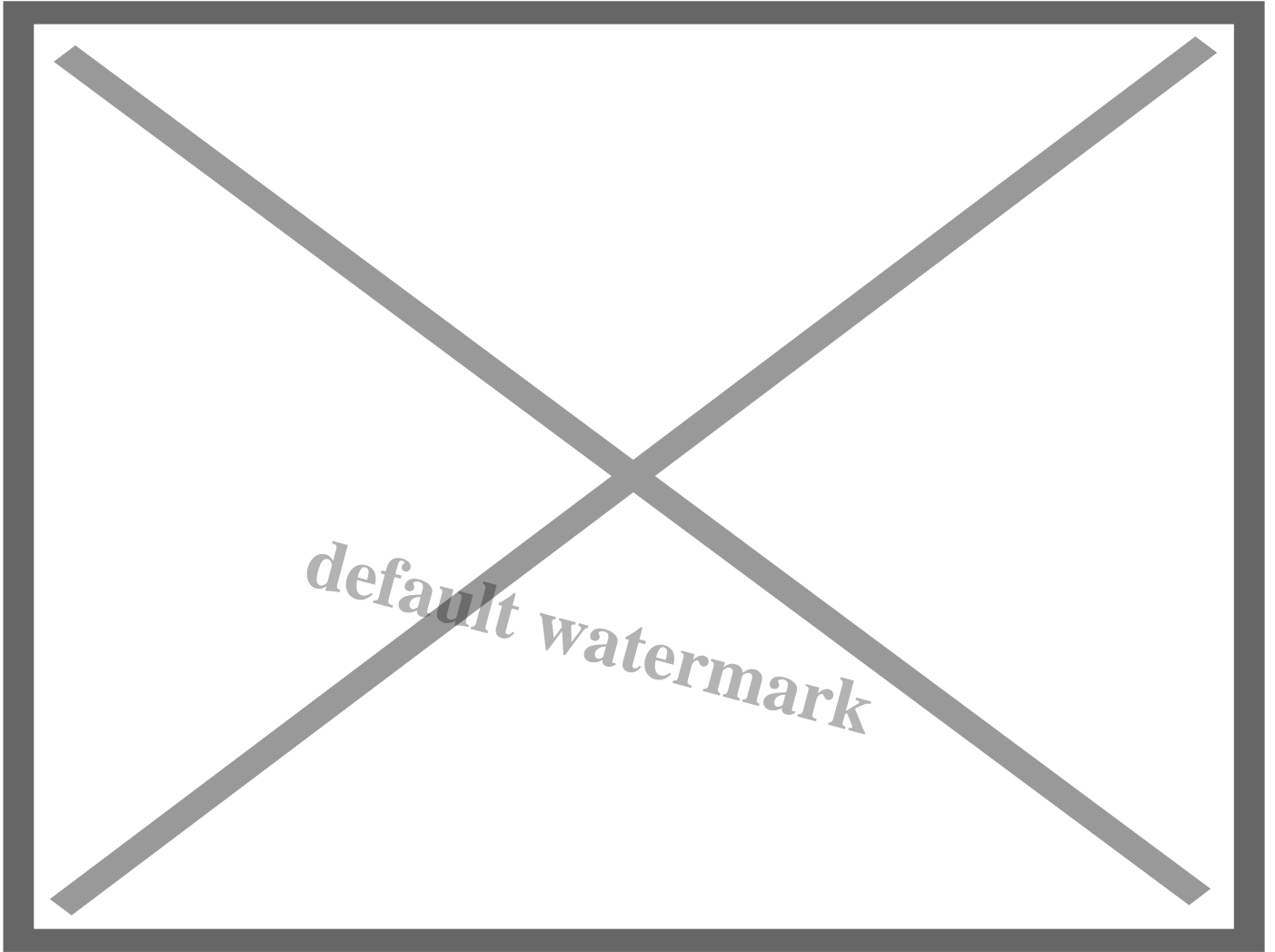




New York Mayor Mamdani successfully recovered \$9m in unpaid fines from Amazon

Description

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New York Mayor [Zohran Mamdani](#), alongside the City's Commissioners in the Department of Finance (DOF) and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), has announced that his administration has managed to recover over \$9m in previously unpaid fines.

These fines came from [idling violations committed by Bezos's delivery vehicles and third-party contractors](#), and despite the Amazon's \$2 trillion valuation, the company has ignored them until now.

This serves as a timely reminder that authorities can hold dominant corporations accountable and make them pay up accordingly when political will exists.

Amazon is worth \$2 trillion. But it didn't deign to pay the millions of dollars it racked up in unpaid fines as its trucks illegally polluted our air and forced New Yorkers to breathe in their exhaust.

"We collected every dollar they owe the people of this city and will"

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[pic.twitter.com/LzIPXP7hR3](https://pic.twitter.com/LzIPXP7hR3)

Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani (@NYCMayor) [May 22, 2026](#)

## Mamdani: No company no matter how large or powerful is above the law

This huge sum recovered from billionaire Jeff Bezos' Amazon was due as a result of New York City's anti-idling laws, which were introduced to tackle air pollution. These laws subsequently made it illegal for most vehicles to keep the engine running whilst idle for more than three minutes. In turn, this would then improve public health and also work to improve action against climate change.

Speaking about the lack of accountability amongst billionaires compared to ordinary, hard-working people, [Mamdani said:](#)

Amazon is worth \$2 trillion. It refused to pay the millions of dollars it racked up in unpaid fines as its trucks illegally polluted the air and forced New Yorkers to breathe in their exhaust. We are going to collect every dollar they owe to the people of this city.

These laws exist for a reason: cleaner air, healthier communities, and a city where corporations are held to the same standard as everyone else.

Today we are making clear that no company no matter how large or powerful is above the law.

Richard Lee, Commissioner for the DOF, showed his support for holding companies accountable, saying:

As part of the Mayor's directive to ensure fairness, collaboration, and accountability in our agency's service to New Yorkers, the Department of Finance is committed to collecting debts owed to the city and supporting enforcement efforts that protect New Yorkers' quality of life.

The successful collection effort led by DOF Deputy Commissioner Annette Hill and her team, demonstrates the effectiveness of this administration working collaboratively with companies to ensure compliance, holding entities accountable for meeting their financial obligations to the City, and assisting companies like Amazon to prevent accumulating debt.

Similarly, Lisa Garcia, Commissioner for the DEP, applauded the Mamdani administration's successful efforts to confront one of the worst idling offenders in the city, stating:

I applaud Mayor Mamdani and the Department of Finance for securing more than \$9 million in illegal idling fines from Amazon, which has long been among the top worst idling offenders in the city.

Through the Citizens Air Complaint Program, New Yorkers can report idling with a video upload — helping us cut air pollution and improve quality of life.

Adding a particular poignancy to this news is the fact that it followed Jeff Bezos’s public criticisms of Mamdani’s moves to tax wealth to better fund education.

Contrary to establishment politicians who bend to big money and corporations, Mamdani did not back down and made it clear that society should hold everyone to the same standards, rather than continually burdening the 99% while letting the super-rich escape accountability.

New York City Mayor Eric Adams and Deputy Mayor Michael Block, under Mayor Eric Adams, announced that Mayor Michael Block has collected \$9m (£6.6m) in unpaid fines from Amazon, which has been breaking the city’s clean air laws by leaving engines running on its parked vehicles.

His office announced the recovery of the money last week after Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos’s [pic.twitter.com/BGoJb5eHft](https://pic.twitter.com/BGoJb5eHft)

It’s politics (@uspolitics1111) [May 25, 2026](#)

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## Citizen-led justice

New Yorkers can make anonymous reports about idling vehicles by calling 311, filing an online complaint, or participating in the NYC Department of Environmental Protection’s Citizens Air Complaint Program.

As a result, this gives ordinary citizens a powerful tool to take action in their local communities and helps ensure they apply accountability without fear or favour, with citizen-led justice as an underlying principle.

Needless to say, this issue is likely also a problem in the UK, where Amazon operates heavily. It will be interesting to see whether UK leaders consider introducing a similar policy. However, that would require them to be willing to make sure that extreme wealth does not shield powerful actors from accountability while they accumulate more wealth at the expense of our society and the environment.

Nevertheless, we won’t be holding our breath.

Featured image via [Justin Sullivan/Getty Images](#)

By [Maddison Wheeldon](#)

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