

## If It Looks and Quacks Like a Demolition ...

It is difficult to break up the steel structures of skyscrapers. Structural steel bends rather than shatters, unless subjected to very high blast pressures. Even if several stories of a skyscraper at ground level were obliterated, the whole skyscraper wouldn't shatter. Rather, it would topple, leaving large assemblies intact, if bent. Getting a tall steel building to fall straight down into its footprint is an engineering feat that only a few companies specialize in. Structural elements must be destroyed in a precise order. A second delay in destroying some of the columns on a story could cause such a tall building to topple into adjacent real-estate.

Building 7's straight down collapse, with the outer walls falling inward towards the tower's central axis, is exactly the kind of collapse typically engineered to take down a tall building: the core columns are shattered ahead of the perimeter columns, so the building's central mass sinks ahead of its perimeter, and thereby pulls the the perimeter mass inward.

## Tenants

Building 7's tenants included the Secret Service, the Internal Revenue Service, and several financial institutions, including the Securities and Exchange Commission. The SEC lost numerous case files in the collapse -- files relating to investigations of corporations such as World Com.

Building 7 also housed Mayor Giuliani's Emergency Command Center, a bunker on the 23rd floor with blast-resistant windows and its own air and water supply. The mayor was operating out of temporary quarters at 75 Barkley Street when the towers collapsed. Supposedly, the command center was evacuated before the first tower collapsed, even though no-one -- certainly not the firemen -- had expected any of the buildings to collapse.

## Conclusion

The official story blames fires for the total collapse of Building 7, but fires have never before or since leveled steel buildings. That, and the fact that the building's collapse has all of the appearances of a controlled demolition, constitutes prima facie evidence that a crime was committed -- a crime the alleged perpetrators of the September 11th attacks did not have the means to commit. Shouldn't this be the subject of an honest investigation? Shouldn't the entire September 11th attack be the subject of a genuine investigation?

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# Building 7

## The Tip of the Iceberg

### How Could Fire Make a Steel Building Implode?

Why should anyone care about Building 7, a 47-story steel skyscraper that imploded? Because, despite the appearance of demolition, we are told that the building collapsed because of fires. Fires have never caused steel frame buildings to collapse, let alone implode and fall neatly into their footprints, as did Building 7. It should have been a huge story. The fires in the building were comparatively small. That a robust steel skyscraper, built to withstand severe fires, hurricanes, and earthquakes, should suddenly collapse for no reason other than fire should have forced a re-evaluation of the safety of all existing skyscrapers and of highrise design in general.

Most people don't remember anything about Building 7's collapse on the day of horrors of September 11th, 2001. The collapse was afforded minimal coverage that afternoon, eclipsed by other 'coverage' like repeated playings of the South Tower impact, and mug shots of Osama bin Laden. After September 11th, it was difficult to find any trace of coverage about building 7 and its collapse. Apparently the most bizarre engineering failure in history warranted only shallow attention on the day of the attack, and virtually none thereafter. Perhaps it was the lack of a human interest *angle*, since nobody was thought to have died in the collapse.

## The Vertical Collapse

Building 7 collapsed in a nearly perfectly vertical motion at near the rate of free-fall. The first sign of the collapse was the falling of the penthouse, immediately followed by the falling of the whole facade. It fell straight-down and its barely more than 6-second time of total collapse was almost as fast as free-fall. (An object would take 5.956 seconds to fall from the height of WTC 7's roof -- 571 feet -- in a vacuum.) The event was captured on several videos, viewable on the wtc7.net website.



Building 7 was the dark sleek building in front of the Twin Towers. It was 300 feet from the nearest tower.



Building 7 at 3 seconds into its 6-second collapse. The penthouse started to fall about a second before the entire facade, and the building's center sank faster than the perimeter. Streamers of smoke can be seen emerging from the facade. These are features of a controlled demolition.

## The (Non)Investigation

The total collapse of Building 7 due to fire would violate all kinds of assumptions about the engineering of skyscrapers. It was the largest and least understood engineering failure in World history, excepting the collapses of the towers earlier that day. The remains of the building should have been carefully examined and documented on-site, then removed to warehouses for further study. Yet the U.S. Government spent only \$600,000 to investigate the collapse of all three skyscrapers. It entrusted the investigation to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, even though it is a non-investigative agency. FEMA assembled a group of volunteer investigators, whose access to the disaster site was limited to a "guided tour."

In May of 2002 FEMA's team released its report. The report's authors seem to be certain that fire caused the collapse, but admit to being clueless about how fires did what they have never done before.



Building 7's precise fall left a tidy pile of rubble. Damage to adjacent buildings was limited, the skyscraper having miraculously avoided damaging its closest neighbors, the Verizon building and U.S. Post Office building.

FEMA's report stated:

*The specifics of the fires in WTC 7 and how they caused the building to collapse remain unknown at this time. Although the total diesel fuel on the premises contained massive potential energy, the best hypothesis has only a low probability of occurrence. Further research, investigation, and analysis are needed to resolve this issue.*

By the time the report was published, nearly all of the steel had been removed from Building 7's site, most without examination, and was recycled, mostly in India and China. The steel would not be of much use to further research and investigation after it had been through a blast furnace. This evidence destruction operation was conducted over the objections fire safety officials, fire-fighters, and victims' families.

## The Fires

There were diesel fuel storage tanks in the building, and rumors abound about fuel tank explosions. Diesel fuel does not burn easily, It would be very difficult to get a diesel fuel tank to explode. Even if the diesel fuel fed fires in Building 7, it would not have endangered the steel frame. No such fire, however long and well-fueled, has ever destroyed a multi-story steel-frame building. Building 7 showed only small areas of fire, on its 7th and 12th floors, shortly before its collapse.

Fires have never been blamed for the collapse of a steel frame highrise before, and there are examples of skyscrapers being ravaged by severe fires. Recent examples of highrise fires include the 1991 One Meridian Plaza fire in Philadelphia, which raged for 18 hours and gutted 8 floors of the 38 floor building; and the 1988 First Interstate Bank Building fire in Los Angeles, which burned out of control for 3 1/2 hours and gutted 4 floors of the 64 floor tower. Both of these fires were far more severe than any fires seen in Building 7, but those buildings did not collapse. The Los Angeles fire was described as producing "no damage to the main structural members".



The Interstate Bank Building fire consumed several floors but did not damage the steel superstructure.