

As a result of these conditions, only a limited number of photographers and videographers were able to approach WTC 7 closely enough to obtain imagery of the lower floors after 11:00 a.m. Very little imagery was collected showing the lower 13 floors during the last hour or so before WTC 7 collapsed.

Rubble from the WTC 1 Collapse

The southern face of WTC 7 was located approximately 107 m (350 ft) from the base of WTC 1. (See Figure 5–2 for orientation.) When this tower collapsed, it deposited a large pile of debris on Vesey Street in front of WTC 7 and along the east side of the south face of the Verizon Building. These piles of debris hindered approach to WTC 7 along these streets. As a result, it was very difficult to even reach a position with a clear view of the lower floors of the WTC 7 south face.

The collapse of WTC 1 also deposited a significant amount of debris on Washington Street between WTC 7 and the Verizon Building. Scaffolding that had been on the Verizon Building was dislodged and was also piled in the street. The debris limited access to the west side of WTC 7, and most available views of the lower floors of this face were taken from near the corner of Washington Street and Barclay Street.

Vehicle Fires

Shortly after the collapse of WTC 1, a large number of vehicle fires grew on West Broadway between Park Place and Vesey Street. While these fires temporarily limited access to WTC 7, they were extinguished fairly early, and it later became possible to enter this area, since there was very little heavy debris between WTC 7 and the U.S. Post Office. Several photographers and videographers managed to work their way up West Broadway as far as Vesey Street.

Fires in WTC 7

Around 2:00 p.m., fires broke out on the east side of WTC 7, and it became dangerous to be on the street below due to falling glass and the intensity of the fires. People were moved up West Broadway to at least its intersection with Barclay Street. Some views of the lower floors burning on this face were taken from here. In general, it was possible to move along Barclay Street behind WTC 7, and limited imagery is available showing close-ups of the lower floors of the north face of WTC 7. It certainly became less safe to move along this street when fires appeared on the north face around 3:00 p.m.

5.4.3 Timing and Coding of WTC 7 Visual Information

Once the photographs and videos had been acquired and cataloged (NIST NCSTAR 1-5A and Section 5.2 of this report), it was necessary to assign times to them. The process used was similar to that for the more numerous images available for the WTC towers, although the limited available imagery made it more challenging to time the images and to develop a full time line for the fire behavior in WTC 7.

A portion of the imagery of WTC 7 was shot in digital formats that provided timestamps. For some of these, cameras times could be accurately determined, since their clocks could be tied to events that occurred before WTC 1 collapsed. These images provided a limited number of views of WTC 7 at well defined times. There were also larger numbers of photographs and videos taken at times that could not be