

Terrible Tuesday

I was shell-shocked. It was the morning of September 11. The mind-numbing news of two airliners crashing into the World Trade Center crackled over the radio. By the time I got to the lifeguard HQ, the live TV shots of the buildings in flame had us watching in stunned silence. We wondered how those firefighters were ever going to deal with a fire a thousand feet up. Then when we later learned that both WTC buildings had collapsed with hundreds of Emergency Service workers still inside, we could only gasp and pray.

Preserving life is the basic theme that we share with Firefighters, Paramedics and other EMS professionals. Some of our agencies incorporate all these functions within the same department. Some part-time lifeguards also work in these other occupations. Given this closeness, the tragic incidents of September 11 became even more stunning, more overwhelming. Knowing that so many brave and dedicated men and women had died in the line of duty left us feeling devastated. We extend our sincere condolences and deepest sympathy to the co-workers, families, friends and loved ones of these heroes.



The Twin Towers burning, a view from the surf. Photo by Ronnie Lower.