

Another striking fact is that the dust cloud was very hot and was burning people and setting objects on fire. In the public domain, there are photos of the many vehicles that were set on fire or burned in the area.

Paul Curran, a member of the New York City Fire Patrol, was asked what he thought was the cause of these vehicle fires. Curran responded:

“I believe it must have been from the debris falling and the heat just started hitting the cars and starting cars on fire. There were an awful lot of cars burning, an awful lot. It had to be radiated heat or just stuff falling on cars and setting them on fire. There were numerous cars burning, numerous.”

There were also many witnesses to the cloud being very hot and burning people as it passed by. The following are excerpts from some of their testimonies:

“Then the dust cloud hits us. Then it got real hot. It felt like it was going to light up almost.”

– Thomas Spinard, FDNY Engine 7

“A wave – a hot, solid, black wave of heat threw me down the block.”

– David Handschuh, New York’s Daily News

“...the hot billowing cloud of death chasing us through the narrow streets of lower Manhattan”

– Andred Fagan

“When I was running, some hot stuff went down my back, because I didn’t have time to put my coat back on, and I had

some – well, I guess between first and second degree burns on my back.”

– Marcel Claes, FDNY Firefighter

“I was running, and stuff was coming down. This time fire was coming down, because I could feel the heat. I grabbed a firefighter’s turnout coat that just seemed to be in front of me. I grabbed it. I threw it over my shoulders. I didn’t make it much further than that. ... It was really hot, because this time there was fire. I know that because my neck burned.”

– Louis Cook, FDNY Paramedic Division

“By the time it took me to break the back window of the SUV my safety coat was already on fire, my socks were on fire.”

– Ronald Thomas Coyne, EMT Battalion 44

“Sal ran west somewhere and got blown off, got burnt on the back of his back.”

– James Curran, FDNY

“...and then we’re engulfed in the smoke, which was horrendous. One thing I remember, it was hot. The smoke was hot and that scared me”

– Paramedic, Manuel Delgado

“I remember making it into the tunnel and it was this incredible amount of wind, debris, heat....”

– Brian Fitzpatrick, FDNY Firefighter

“A huge, huge blast of hot wind gusting and smoke and dust and all kinds of debris hit me.”

– Firefighter, Louis Giaconelli