

USPS sorting facility partially collapses in Tampa, Florida

Patrick Smith
4 May 2025

Witnesses and TV crews reported a “chaotic scene” and a “close call for workers” when dozens were inside a USPS distribution center in Tampa, Florida when the structure collapsed, sending them scrambling for safety. Local TV stations reported that code enforcement inspectors had said, “It was miraculous that nobody was injured or killed.”

Reports said those in the building at the time of the collapse believed they were saved by a mezzanine structure that prevented the wall from collapsing entirely to the ground.

Ryan Brown, a worker whose shift had ended about an hour before the incident, got a frantic text from a co-worker at the facility when the incident happened: “It’s scary; they were running to their cars, trying to get out of here.” He added, “It’s not as heavily populated as in the back there. So, I think we’re fortunate that nobody was having a meeting or doing anything there.”

Employees told local reporters that the affected building section contained management offices, meeting spaces, storage areas, concessions and employee locker rooms.

A USPS spokesperson said it prompted an “immediate response from inspectors and code enforcement officials who remained on site the following day.” There has been no definitive report on what caused the collapse, but videos circulating show water spraying inside the building moments before the incident.

In 2019, a US Postal Service mail distribution center’s roof collapsed after major flooding, injuring three people.

Don Barron, president of the American Postal Workers Union, suggested that water issues may have triggered the collapse. “This could’ve been a buildup. I don’t know, the engineers will be able to tell you that. A buildup of water and possibly the second floor or the infrastructure that just welded up to the point that you have a collapse.”

The collapse takes place amid deep attacks on the post office, with the Trump administration openly declaring privatization its goal. However, this would be the culmination of decades of bipartisan cuts to the Post Office, beginning with its demotion to an independent agency under Richard Nixon.

A 1970 Postal Strike provoked the actions of the Nixon Administration and brought the agency to its knees with over 200,000 workers in over 30 cities. After that, it was reorganized into the US Postal Service, and stopped receiving any taxpayer funding and forced to rely entirely on revenue.

Since then, the ruling class has been systematic in its effort to privatize the Post Office. Congress exploited the requirement to “balance the books” in 2006 when it passed the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA), requiring USPS to pre-fund pension and healthcare obligations 50 years in advance to help the Bush Administration balance its books.

By 2022, the retirement obligation was \$135 billion, resulting in Congress passing the Postal Reform Act. This act eliminated the postal worker healthcare system, forcing workers onto Medicare. Now, the Trump Administration is working with Elon Musk and his Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to

gut Medicare.

Constructed approximately five years ago, the affected facility had supposedly undergone recent inspections, raising questions about its thoroughness.

While there were no injuries, the collapse of this building recalls other recent building collapses due to cost-cutting measures.

Recently, on April 8th, the Jet Set nightclub roof in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, suddenly caved in. Rescuers have retrieved 233 people who have been found dead and 225 others injured.

When the disaster struck, the venue had over 1,000 attendees, while some reports indicate that it had reached full capacity of over 2,000. The structure was once a cinema in the 1970s and was refurbished in 2010 and 2015, but these renovations didn't adhere to modern safety standards.

Another example of neglect is the Champlain Towers South condominium in Surfside, Florida that collapsed, killing 98 people on June 24, 2021. In this case, a *New York Times* article said they “created a 3-D tower model based on the original design drawings. That model, combined with a review of documents and interviews with structural experts, reveals how design errors, last-minute changes, dubious construction practices, and years of worsening deterioration could have all contributed to the collapse.”

In 2017, the Grenfell Tower in London, England incinerated. Profit-driven cost-cutting measures have been directly attributed to the fire that killed 72 people.



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)