

Construction Starts On Freedom Tower

Four-and-a-half years after terrorists destroyed the World Trade Center in New York City, a new building is rising up on the same spot.



Construction on the new building, called the Freedom Tower, began April 27. When it is completed in 2011, the Freedom Tower will be the tallest building in North America. The tower itself will be 1,368 feet tall -- the exact height of the two World Trade Center towers. A spire on top of the tower will bring its total height to 1,776 feet. That height was chosen because 1776 was the year we declared our freedom from England.

It took many months to finish the design for the tower. The first design was completed in 2003. Changes had to be made because police were worried about the safety of the building. In the new design, the glass tower sits atop a 200-foot-tall base. That base includes a core of concrete that will protect the tower's elevators and stairways. The base building will be covered in concrete and metal.

NEWS WORD BOX

construction spire
terrorists destroyed
observation elevators
height design concrete

Freedom Tower will have 82 floors and more than 2 million square feet of office space. Visitors will enjoy an observation deck and restaurant on the top floor of the tower.

MORE FACTS ABOUT THE FREEDOM TOWER

- The World Trade Center, also called the Twin Towers, was destroyed when terrorists flew planes into the buildings on September 11, 2001.
- A memorial to the World Trade Center attacks is being constructed at another area of the site. That memorial is due to open in 2009.

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

The day before construction started on the new tower, New York Governor George Pataki said the tower is "a symbol of our freedom and independence."
Why do you think he chose those words to describe the tower?