

Structure Fire Response

405.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document provides arrival and on-scene procedures for Euless Fire Department units responding to a structure fire.

This procedure provides an overview of the tactics and strategy used by the Fire Department during basic structural firefighting operations. It also identifies certain activities that must take place at every structure fire. Every member of the fire department is expected to maintain a very thorough working knowledge of the structural firefighting principles found in this publication.

The Basic Structure Fire Tactical Plan is a model initial deployment plan that identifies what to accomplish during initial phases of a one-alarm residential structure fire. These tasks, however, can be modified by Command at any time as warranted.

Corresponding Policies:

- Incident Command
- Fireground Accountability
- Emergency Response
- Incident Management
- Rapid Intervention/Two-In Two-Out

405.1.1 GUIDELINES AND EMPOWERMENT

These guidelines provide the Incident Commander with a standard procedure of coordinating fire ground activities. Companies are empowered to carry out these pre-assigned tasks, unless redirected by Command. With a plan in place, even with poor communications, key tactical priorities are covered with increased safety and efficiency.

405.1.2 TACTICAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The officer assuming Command of this type of incident has the discretion to deviate from the Tactical Plan whenever necessary. This is flexible and only indicates the activities needed to be completed on a structure fire. The number of units per activity and the sequence of the activities will be dictated by the situation at times. Flexibility is key on the fire ground. A plan is essential.

However, communications to arriving companies becomes critical to ensure they are aware of any changes in the model attack plan.

Declare an initial operational mode based on extent of fire, life hazards, building construction, occupancy premises and resources available:

- (a) Offensive
- (b) Defensive

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405.1.3 TASKS

The Basic Structure Fire Tactical Plan identifies tasks that must be performed on all residential structure fires. These tasks relate to rescue, fire control, the establishment of command, ventilation, water supply, support, and other tasks necessary to perform a safe fire attack.

These initial tasks are assigned to units responding to the structure based on their order of arrival on the fire scene. Each task is identified by what is to be done, by whom, and are performed in a coordinated manner.

Each apparatus must communicate on the radio when they arrive and what task they are performing.

405.2 OFFENSIVE STRUCTURE FIRE

Fire Apparatus Assignments

- (a) The first arriving Fire Apparatus is responsible for:
 - 1. Initial scene size-up
 - 2. Declaring which mode of operation will be used (Nothing Showing, Fast Attack, Command, Rescue)
 - (a) Nothing Showing – If the first arriving unit arrives and finds "nothing showing," all other units will stage until either given an assignment, or cleared from the scene. The second arriving fire apparatus stages at the water supply.
 - (b) Rescue Mode – If the first arriving officer finds a civilian life safety problem, he or she can declare "Rescue" mode. This mode is to be utilized when the officer receives firsthand information about a victim from bystanders, family, or visually. Two-in, two-out exemption will be exercised and the initial unit will attempt a rescue at a specific location. When rescue mode is declared, the next arriving officer knows that he or she will assume command of the incident.
 - (c) Fast Attack – If the first arriving officer finds smoke or fire conditions, He or she can declare a "fast attack" mode. This mode is to be utilized when the officer believes his or her personal hands-on involvement will have a definite impact on the outcome (usually a small fire that can be handled with one hose line if gotten to quickly enough). When fast-attack mode is declared, the next arriving officer knows that he or she will assume command of the incident.
 - (d) Command– If the first arriving officer believes that it would be most beneficial to the incident to stay outside and direct other incoming units, they will initiate command mode and will establish an outside command post.
 - 3. Perform initial walk-around
 - 4. Deploy the primary attack line
 - 5. Ventilation Assessment

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- (b) Second arriving Fire Apparatus is responsible for:
 - 1. Establishing water supply
 - 2. Command will be assumed if first in officer declared Fast Attack or Rescue Mode
 - 3. Primary Search
 - 4. Designation: "WATER SUPPLY" Responsible for an uninterrupted water supply to the attack apparatus.
 - 5. Benchmark: "WATER SUPPLY COMPLETE" Uninterrupted water supply established.
 - 6. Designation: "SEARCH GROUP" Responsible for a primary or secondary search. Command will indicate which in the tactical objective.
 - 7. Benchmark: "(PRIMARY OR SECONDARY) SEARCH ALL CLEAR" Indicating that the search is complete with no one found.
- (c) Third Arriving Fire Apparatus is responsible for:
 - 1. Ventilation.
 - 2. Designation: "VENTILATION GROUP" Responsible for completing ventilation as they see fit, or as indicated by Command in the tactical objective.
 - 3. Benchmark: "VENTILATION COMPLETE" This indicates that act of ventilation is complete and the structure is venting.
- (d) Fourth arriving Fire Apparatus is responsible for:
 - 1. Establishing the permanent RIT group and are responsible for:
 - (a) Reporting to Command for briefing
 - (b) Briefing with IRIT
 - (c) Gathering the appropriate tools for RIT
 - (d) Completing a walk around
 - (e) Setting ladders for egress
 - (f) Softening the structure
 - (g) Disconnecting utilities as needed
 - (h) Designation: "RIT GROUP" Assemble tools and equipment needed for firefighter rescue according to NEFDA RIT SOP.
 - (i) Benchmark: "RIT ASSEMBLED (LOCATION)" Tools and equipment in place, walk around complete, ladders set as needed, softening complete and ready for action at established location.
- (e) Automatic or Mutual Aid Fire Apparatus reports to Command for assignment. Assignment may be to assist other units as needed or provide support operations (i.e. pulling ceiling, lighting, salvage, etc.).

Medic Unit Assignments

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- (a) First arriving Medic unit will establish the initial RIT group and are responsible for:
 - 1. Gather appropriate tools for IRIT activities
 - 2. Complete a walk around
 - 3. Secure utilities
 - 4. Soften structure as needed
 - 5. Ensure access of area if needed (i.e. remove fence or open gates)
 - 6. Set ladders if needed
- (b) Second arriving Medic unit will be the Backup Group and are responsible for:
 - 1. Pull a backup line of equal or, preferably larger GPM.
 - 2. Position and maintain the backup line in a strategic location to protect interior crews.
 - 3. Strategic locations include:
 - (a) Stairways
 - (b) Hallways
 - (c) Egress
 - 4. Keep Incident Commander informed. Backup shares a responsibility of keeping all interior crews safe.
 - 5. If at any point you begin fighting fire you should inform Incident Command immediately. This can be the case when protecting egress and conditions have changed. You may be ordered to assist Attack Group with the fire. At that time, you are now a part of Attack Group and work for them. Backup will be reassigned to another crew and line.
 - 6. Designation: "BACKUP GROUP" Responsible for deploying and maintaining a backup line and insuring the safety of all interior crews.
 - 7. Benchmark: "BACKUP LINE IN PLACE" Backup line has been pulled, stretched, and charged in the appropriate area of the structure.
- (c) Third arriving Medic unit:
 - 1. The third medic will respond code 3 and stage near the scene. They should remain with their vehicle, available for medical calls, until otherwise assigned by the Incident Commander. Effort should be made to keep this unit available to respond to other calls within the city unless the Incident Commander has a specific assignment for them.
 - 2. If the Incident Commander perceives the need for a medical group, the third medic will establish MEDICAL GROUP. They will be responsible for the treatment and transport of potential victims as well as injured fire personnel. This group may also be tasked with starting Rehab.
 - 3. Designation: "MEDICAL GROUP" Treatment and transport of sick or injured.

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Benchmark: "MEDICAL GROUP ESTABLISHED (LOCATION)" Equipment and personnel are in place at specified location.

- (d) The Battalion Chief Serves as Incident Commander responsible for coordinating all fire ground activities and managing resources. The Battalion Chief retains command unless relieved by a higher ranking officer. If relieved, the Battalion Chief can be assigned to Operations or another position as determined by the Incident Commander. The Battalion Chief or IC should:
 - 1. If fire or smoke is visible, declare a working incident.
 - 2. Consult a building pre-plan, if available.
 - 3. Locate a Primary (Level 1) staging area and direct units to the scene or primary staging as needed.
 - 4. Establish the department personnel accountability system. Whenever practicable, the accountability location should be at the incident command post.
 - 5. Perform or direct another member to perform a 360 assessment and report the results to the IC.
 - 6. Develop an initial incident action plan (IAP) and, based upon resources, prioritize and assign tasks to incoming units. Task assignments should include, but are not limited to:
 - (a) Scene safety
 - (b) Primary search and rescue
 - (c) Initial fire attack
 - (d) Water supply
 - (e) Ventilation
 - (f) Exposure
 - (g) Extension
 - (h) Overhaul
 - (i) Salvage.

405.3 PROCEDURES

405.3.1 RESOURCE DEPLOYMENT

- (a) Apparatus
 - 1. Apparatus should position according to a building pre-plan, if available, or as directed by the IC while maintaining the ability to secure a water supply and accountability location.
 - (a) If the structure includes an energy storage system (ESS) containing lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries, apparatus should position according to the

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ESS pre-plan or the Hazardous Materials Incident Response Procedure, if no ESS pre-plan exists.

2. The IC should include but not be limited to the following considerations when ordering apparatus into a scene:
 - (a) Water supply
 - (b) Fire attack
 - (c) Aerial operations
 - (d) Collapse zones
 - (e) Potential for backdraft or explosion from the structure based on fire behavior and known building contents
 - (f) Access to tools and equipment
 - (g) Space for incoming units needed for immediate operations
- (b) Personnel
 1. Personnel should be in full personal protective equipment (PPE), including self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).
 2. Personnel should remain with assigned crew and enter the hot zone only when directed to do so by the IC.
 3. Personnel should communicate operations benchmarks to the IC. This should include but is not limited to when an assigned task:
 - (a) Is started.
 - (b) Is producing results or is not achieving the task goal.
 - (c) Is complete.

405.3.2 OPERATIONS

- (a) Continuing scene size-up
 1. The IC should conduct size-up continuously at every fire to account for changes at the scene, including but not limited to:
 - (a) Resources available
 - (b) Scene conditions
 - Weather
 - Fire location, flow and size
 2. The results of additional scene size-up should be communicated to Dispatch.
- (b) Fire Suppression. Whenever practicable, these operations should take place in sequential order:
 1. Locate the seat of the fire.

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- (a) As assigned by the IC, personnel should determine the location and extent of the fire. Equipment and tools used for this task include, but are not limited to:
 - Thermal imaging cameras.
 - Entry and access tools.
 - Hand lights.
- 2. Identify the flow path.
 - (a) As assigned by the IC, personnel should, as is reasonably practicable, determine any flow path. The presence of a flow path should determine coordinated ventilation and suppression operations to, as much as is reasonably practicable, limit fire growth and protect personnel and building occupants.
- 3. Cool the space from a location that allows for brief, rapid water application to cool or reset the fire when high heat may exist in spaces where occupants may be trapped and/or personnel may have to operate.
 - (a) From a location determined to best account for size, location and flow path of the fire, water should be applied to darken the fire, usually for a period of 10 to 30 seconds, or as long as needed, to reduce high thermal conditions and energy levels of the fire.
 - (b) Fire reset operations should be communicated to operating units before starting and when completed. After completing a fire reset, task assignments should be communicated to operating units.
- 4. Extinguish.
 - (a) After the fire has been reset, the IC should direct personnel to extinguish the fire as directly as reasonably practicable under the conditions.
- (c) Additional fireground tasks that should be considered based on scene conditions.
 - 1. Search and Rescue
 - (a) The IC should consider the assigning personnel to search and rescue tasks based upon information from:
 - Dispatch.
 - Witnesses on-scene.
 - Occupants who have exited the structure.
 - Visual or auditory identification based upon scene size-up, 360 assessment and/or personnel engaged in operations.
 - 2. Property Preservation and Salvage
 - (a) Personnel should make reasonable efforts to preserve property and reduce the potential for property damage from smoke, fire and firefighting operations. This includes but is not limited to:

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- Checking to see if doors and windows are unlocked before engaging in forcible entry.
 - Closing doors of rooms not directly impacted by firefighting operations.
 - Moving contents from rooms where firefighting operations are taking place or are otherwise affected by firefighting operations.
 - Grouping contents into one area and covering with tarps.
 - Isolating rooms and areas where fire exists from other rooms or areas of the structure.
3. Ventilation
- (a) Personnel should engage in ventilation activities only at the direction of the IC. Ventilation should be coordinated with all other fire suppression and search and rescue operations to minimize unanticipated change in flow path and to protect, as much as is reasonably practicable, personnel and occupants.

405.4 OFFENSIVE VERSUS DEFENSIVE FIRE ATTACK

- (a) **Offensive** - Offensive strategy is an aggressive (timely and efficient) attack on the fire based on the stage of the fire, location of the fire, and structural integrity. Initial attack efforts must be directed toward finding and protecting occupants. The wellbeing, escape, and/or rescue of potential victims must be the priority in fire attack. If possible, determine fire location and extent before starting fire operations. Command cannot lose sight of the very simple and basic fireground reality that at some point the fire forces must engage the fire and fight. Command must structure whatever operations are required to PUT WATER ON THE FIRE. The rescue/fire control/extension/exposure problem is solved in the majority of cases by a fast, strong, well-placed attack.
Offensive attack positions should achieve an effect on the fire quickly. Consequently, backup judgments should also be developed quickly. The effect of the interior attack must be evaluated. Command must be aware and responsive to mode changes.
- (b) **Marginal** - Many times offensive/defensive conditions are clear cut and Command can quickly develop a decision that relates to that mode. In other cases, the situation is marginal and Command must initiate an offensive interior attack to support a primary search, while setting up defensive positions on the exterior. This is generally known as a "marginal attack" and is used to support crews interior to the building long enough to complete a primary search. Once the primary search is complete, the personnel are withdrawn and defensive positions are utilized.
- (c) **Defensive** - If at any time during the incident, the Incident Commander believes the fire building has no savable lives or property, the mode of operation should be defensive and all firefighting operations should take place outside of the building out of the collapse zone. **OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE FIRE ATTACKS CANNOT OCCUR SIMULTANEOUSLY IN THE SAME AREA.** Defensive operations concentrate on keeping the fire from spreading to exposures and limiting the damage to the areas that

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are already lost. Aerial devices, master streams and hand lines should be deployed with protection of exposures in mind and outside of the collapse zone. Collapse zones will be indicated by red scene style tape. This area taped off with red tape will indicate a collapse zone and is off limits to all personnel. Any entry into this area should be planned and coordinated with both Incident Command and the Incident Safety Officer.

405.5 TRANSITION FROM OFFENSIVE TO DEFENSIVE FIREFIGHTING

The announcement of a change to a defensive mode will be made and all personnel will withdraw from the structure and maintain a safe perimeter. Company officers will account for the safety of assigned personnel and notify Command when they are clear.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT FOR ALL PERSONNEL TO WITHDRAW FROM THE STRUCTURE WILL BE ANNOUNCED ON THE RADIO. IMMEDIATELY AFTER CHANGING MODE OF ATTACK, COMMAND WILL INITIATE A PAR.

Interior lines will be withdrawn (or abandoned if necessary) and repositioned if safe to do so when changing to a defensive mode.

(a) Emergency Evacuation Procedure:

1. AN EMERGENCY EVACUATION ORDER WILL BE INITIATED BY AN "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" RADIO ANNOUNCEMENT FOLLOWED BY THREE FIVE SECOND BLASTS FROM AN AIR HORN.
2. THE HI-LO FUNCTION ON THE PORTABLE RADIO SHOULD ALSO BE UTILIZED IF AVAILABLE. THIS IS ALSO KNOWN AS THE EMERGENCY TONES.
3. A PAR WILL BE CONDUCTED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING A COMPLETED EVACUATION TO CONFIRM THE SAFE EXIT OF ALL COMPANIES.

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405.6 PROCEDURE DECISION TREE

