



In-Station Training

TM 23-28 Class C Recreational Vehicle Fire



Author

Chief Ed Hartin

Purpose

The fire fatality rate (number of fatalities per 1000 fires) for recreational vehicle fires is approximately half that of the fatality rate in one- and two-family homes (USFA, 2022 & Hall, 2023). However, more than one quarter of RV fires originated in the engine, running gear, or wheel area, which is likely occurring when occupants are awake and able to quickly escape. Like other vehicle fires (and older mobile homes), RV fires develop quickly and there are often limited means of escape, presenting a significant risk to occupants. Older RVs used by people who are homeless may be at increased risk of fire occurrence and are likely to not have working smoke alarms.

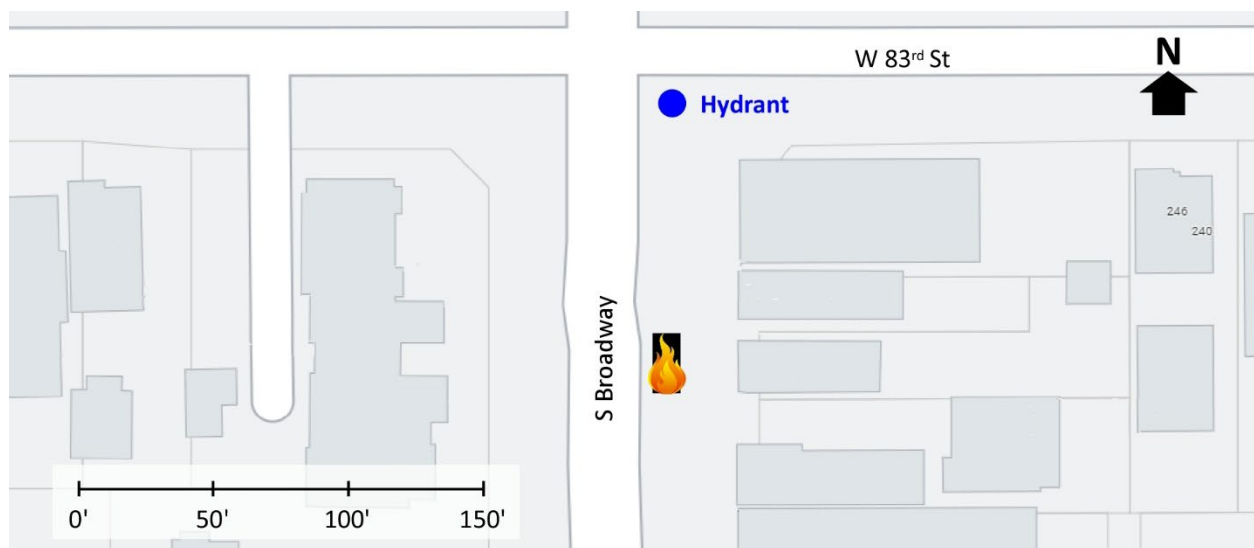
Learning Outcomes

Firefighters and officers perform an effective size-up; select an appropriate strategy, and implement tactics based on the strategic decision-making model.

Conducting the Drill

This incident involved a fire near the intersection of at S Broadway and W 83rd Street in Los Angeles, California on October 3, 2022 (RB Fire Media, 2023). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-4) to gain an understanding of the area and building involved.

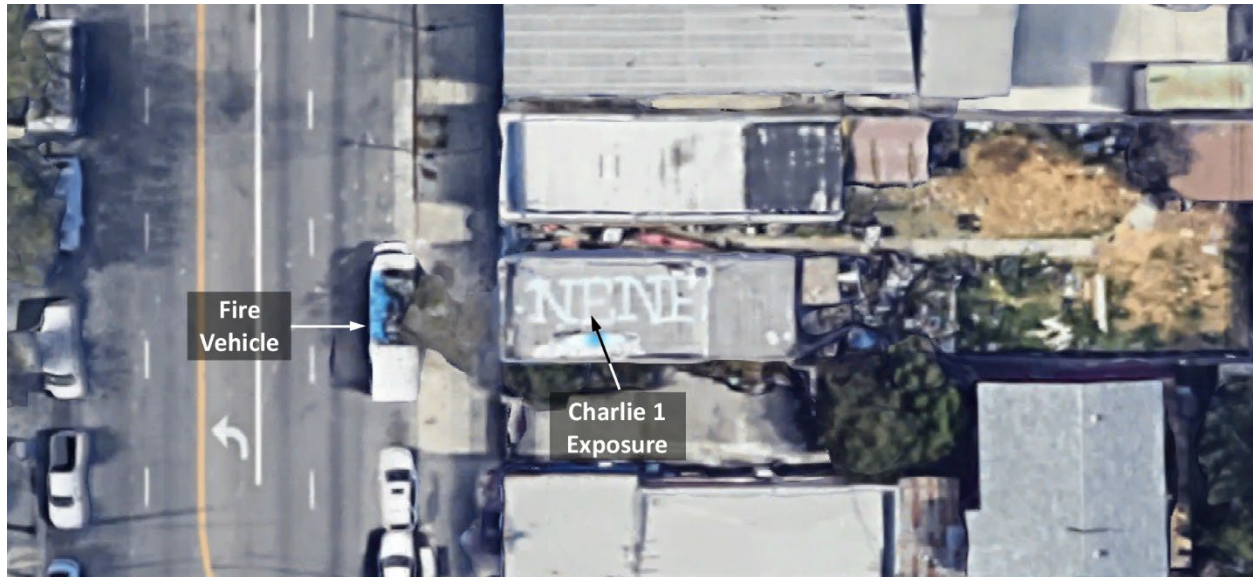
Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023a). [map, 8306 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA]. <https://bit.ly/3NxpD9o>.

The closest hydrant is located just to the north of the incident location at South Broadway and West 83rd Street as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023b). [aerial view, 8306 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA].
<https://bit.ly/46pXWYr>.

Figure 3. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2022a). [street view, 8306 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA].
<https://bit.ly/3C1bTUD>.

Figure 4. Alpha/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2022b). [street view, 8306 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA].

<https://bit.ly/3qSup9y>.

You have been dispatched to West 83rd Street and South Broadway for a vehicle fire at 01:30. You are the company officer or AIC of the first arriving engine and have your company's typical staffing. The temperature is 65° F with no appreciable wind from the north (Weather Underground, 2022).

1. What critical factors would you consider when dispatched and during response and what conversations would you have with your crew while responding?

While responding you hear a command officer and another engine with typical staffing for your agency go enroute. Dispatch provides an update reporting a fire in a recreational vehicle on South Broadway near 83rd Street. The second engine will arrive approximately 10 minutes after you, followed by the command officer. All other units dispatched on the first alarm will arrive after the command officer. You arrive from the north on South Broadway.

Watch the first 00:30 [incident video](#) (RB Fire Media, 2023) and examine Figure 5 illustrating conditions on arrival.

Figure 5. Conditions on Arrival



Note: Adapted RB Fire Media. (2023). Massive RV fire: Los Angeles [video]. <https://bit.ly/46jARGX>

2. State your initial radio report (IRR) exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch.

3. What specific actions would you take (as the company officer) immediately upon arrival and exiting the apparatus and what task orders you would give your crew?

The RV is located 12' from the Charlie 1 Exposure and there are no bystanders.

4. Would you change the action you are taking or modify the assignments given to your crew? If so, what task orders would you provide?

5. State your update report exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch.

6. State the tactical assignment you would give the next arriving engine exactly as you would transmit it.
7. Based on the anticipated effectiveness of your tactical operations, state your conditions, actions, and needs (CAN) report that you would provide to the first arriving command officer as part of command transfer to IC #2?

Watch the [incident video](#) (RB Fire Media, 2023) from 01:35 to 03:35 before answering the next several questions.

8. What factors may have influenced the effectiveness of the initial attack line in quickly suppressing the fire? Think about flow rate and distribution.
9. Once the fire had been knocked down and you engaged in overhaul to complete extinguishment, would you perform a secondary search of the RV? Why or why not?

Additional Learning: While the incident in this 10-Minute Training did not involve a fatality, the potential for fire victims in vehicle fires must be considered. Depending on the extent and duration of fire involvement, the presentation of a deceased person in post fire conditions can vary considerably. Remember that the deceased person located post fire control may be a fire victim, victim of a homicide, or individual who has died from other causes.

Fire can have a significant effect on both soft tissue and bones of the human body. Thermal insult will cause soft tissues to contract, which cause the skin to tear and fat and muscles to shrink. The internal organs will also shrink. Muscles contract causing the joints to flex. Bones do not burn in a uniform way depending on body fat distribution, proximity to the heat source, etc. In addition, remains may be covered entirely or in part by debris. As such, it may be difficult to recognize the presence of human remains in post fire conditions. Consider that you may only be able to see a portion of a femur, vertebrae, or ribs. Out of context, these fragments of the human body may be difficult to recognize so it is important to be observant.

The location, position, and condition of the body provide critical context to determining the cause of death. Movement of the body, bones, or bone fragments can significantly impair the investigation. If

evidence of human remains is observed prior to or during overhaul, **stop!** Notify the fire marshal and law enforcement and treat the area as a crime scene.

For a bit more on forensic archaeology and the effects of fire on human bodies, read [*What Happens to Human Bodies When They Are Burned?*](#) (Thompson & Gowland, n.d.).

References

- Google. (2022a). [street view, 8306 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA]. Retrieved June 26, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/3CibTUd>.
- Google. (2022b). [street view, 8306 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA]. Retrieved June 26, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/3qSup9y>.
- Google. (2023a). [map, 8306 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA]. Retrieved June 26, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/3NxpD9o>.
- Google. (2023b). [aerial view, 8306 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA].
- Hall, S. (2023). *Home structure fires*. Retrieved June 26, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/46qij87>.
- RB Fire Media. (2023). Massive RV fire: Los Angles [video]. Retrieved June 26, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/46jARGX>.
- Thompson, T. & Gowland, R. (n.d.). What happens to human bodies when they are burned?. Retrieved June 27, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/43Ycv3P>.
- United States Fire Administration (USFA). (2022). *Data snapshot: recreational vehicle fires (2018-2020)*. Retrieved June 26, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/3NMjozw>.
- Weather Underground (2022). *Burbank, CA Weather History* [historical weather October 3, 2022]. Retrieved June 26, 2023, from <https://bit.ly/42X1Zsw>.