



# In-Station Training

## TM 24-09 Unresponsive Person



### Author

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### Purpose

Some incidents turn out to be exactly what you are dispatched to, others do not. It is important to consider the fixed and variable factors available when dispatched, with continual review and revision of situation assessment as additional information becomes available.

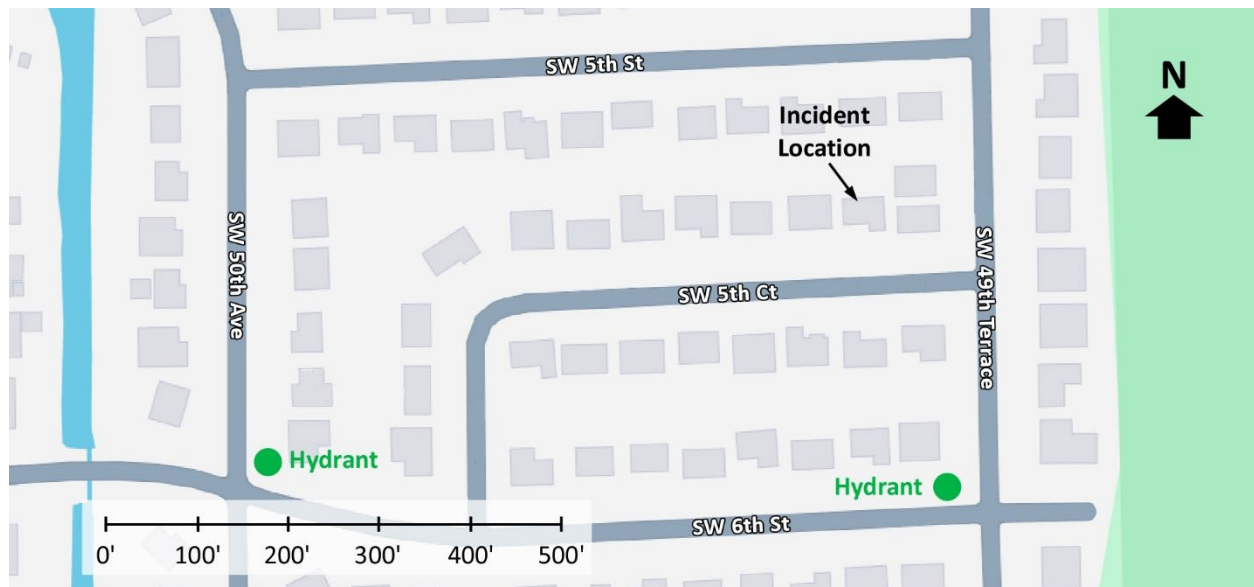
### Learning Outcomes

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 an emergency medical response for an unconscious or fainting episode at 4955 SW Fifth Court, Margate, Florida on January 11, 2024, at 02:30 (WPLG Local, 2024; Deutsch, 2024; & CBS Miami, 2024). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-5) to gain an understanding of the area and building involved.

Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2024a). [Map, 4955 SW Fifth Court, Margate, FL]. <https://bit.ly/3vS9ztH>.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2024b). [Aerial view 4955 SW Fifth Court, Margate, FL].  
<https://bit.ly/49bal3i>.

The closest hydrant is located on Southwest Sixth Street and Southwest 49<sup>th</sup> Terrace. Additional hydrants are in the area as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 3. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023a). [Street view, 4955 SW Fifth Court, Margate, FL].  
<https://bit.ly/3UagYhY>.



Figure 4. Side Alpha



*Note:* Adapted from Google. (2023b). [Street view, 4955 SW Fifth Court, Margate, FL].  
<https://bit.ly/3vSYybq>.

Figure 5. Alpha/Delta Corner



*Note:* Adapted from Google. (2024c). [Street view, 4955 SW Fifth Court, Margate, FL].  
<https://bit.ly/48PkC5k>.

The temperature is currently 67° F with wind from the south at 6 mph (Weather Underground, 2024). You have been dispatched along with a paramedic unit to 4955 SW Fifth Court for a report of an unresponsive adult male. You are the company officer or AIC of the first arriving engine and have your company's typical staffing.

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

You hear a paramedic unit with a staffing level of two go enroute. You will arrive from the west on SW Fifth Court and the paramedic unit will arrive approximately five minutes after you from the same direction. Examine Figure 6 illustrating conditions on arrival.

Figure 6. Conditions on Arrival



*Note:* Adapted WPLG Local 10. (2024). *Margate family hospitalized due to carbon monoxide poisoning* [video]. <https://bit.ly/3UhR0sT>

2. State your initial radio report (IRR) exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch. (This is likely an mobile data computer command,-arrived or a short radio communication that you are on-scene).
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?

Entering the home you find an adult male, unresponsive with a weak carotid pulse of 110 and shallow respirations with a rate of 28 on the living room couch and hear what sounds like a gasoline engine running inside the home and determine that the sound is coming from an electrical generator. A female occupant reports that she has a headache and nausea and that are three other adults and five children in the home.

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.

Further investigation determines that two adults and five children are in the bedrooms of the home. The adults are complaining of headaches and nausea and the children are all extremely drowsy, do not respond to verbal stimuli, but are responsive to pain.

6. What action will you take at this point?
  
7. Medic 1 arrives. What information do you provide them regarding status of the patients.
  
8. Medic 1 begins assessment and treatment for the unresponsive male and tasks you with beginning assessment and treatment for the other patients. How will you approach this assignment? Consider triage, patient assessment, and treatment down to the task level.

The following questions are based on IC #1 having ordered additional resources when transmitting the update report (e.g., multiple engines and medic units). Engine 2 and Chief 1 will arrive approximately five minutes after your request for additional resources. Engine 2 has your agency's typical staffing.

9. Engine 2 arrives and reports they are Level 1 at Southwest 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Southwest 5<sup>th</sup> Court. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.

You determine that in addition to the unresponsive male, you have an additional male and two female patients who are complaining of headache, nausea, and fatigue and are confused. The five pediatric patients ranging in age from one to five remain responsive to pain, but otherwise are unresponsive. All the patients are tachycardic and tachypneic.

10. 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.
11. Upon identification of potential carbon monoxide poisoning, did you exit the building to don self-contained breathing apparatus prior to evacuation/rescue of the patients? Why or why not? What could be the consequences of not donning respiratory protection? Consider the impact of carbon monoxide concentration and time required to perform the necessary rescues?

**Additional Learning:** Review the [SW Region EMS Protocols](#) (Wittwer, 2023) related to carbon monoxide poisoning (see Poisoning and Overdose on Pages 54-56).

For a more detailed understanding of the medical implications of carbon monoxide exposure, read [Carbon Monoxide Toxicity](#) (Hanley & Patel, 2022) and [Carbon Monoxide Toxicity](#) (Palmeri & Gupta, 2022). Discuss how carbon monoxide poisoning may be identified during patient assessment (e.g., signs and symptoms including SpO<sub>2</sub> and COHb levels).

Watch [CO-Oximetry vs Pulse Oximetry](#) (Respiratory HQ, 2024) for an explanation of the differences between these concepts and how SpO<sub>2</sub> and SpCO are applied in the context of a person with carbon monoxide poisoning. In the field SpCO is measured using a device such as the Masimo Rad-57 (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Masimo Rad057® Pulse CO-Oximeter®



Note: Adapted from Masimo (2024). Rad-57® Pulse CO-Oximeter®. <https://bit.ly/3P1HqqD>.

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