



In-Station Training

TM 25-05 Apartment Fire



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Purpose

Fire and building codes address fire safety in apartments through compartmentation and depending on the code and size of the building, though fixed fire protection systems such as automatic sprinklers. However, these measures may not be as effective when the fire starts outside the building, such as on a patio or balcony.

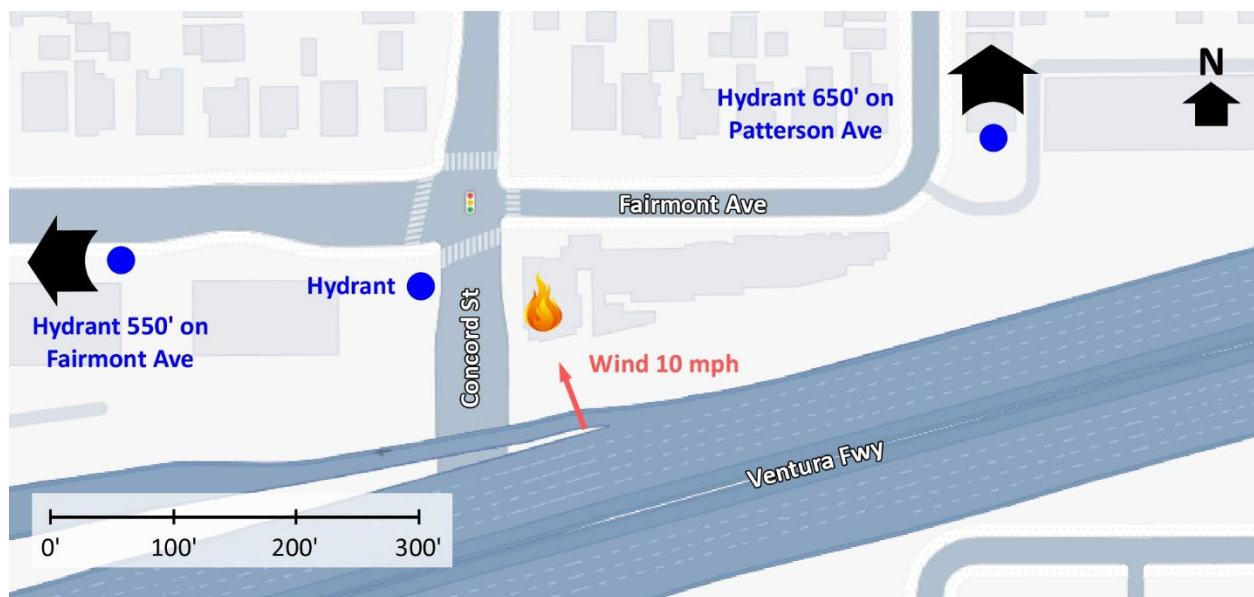
Learning Outcomes

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 apartment fire originating on a balcony at 700 Fairmont Avenue in Glendale, California on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at 11:45 (The411, 2024). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-7) to gain an understanding of the area and building involved.

Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2024a). [Map, 700 Fairmont Ave, Glendale, CA]. <https://bit.ly/4h0bAGn>.

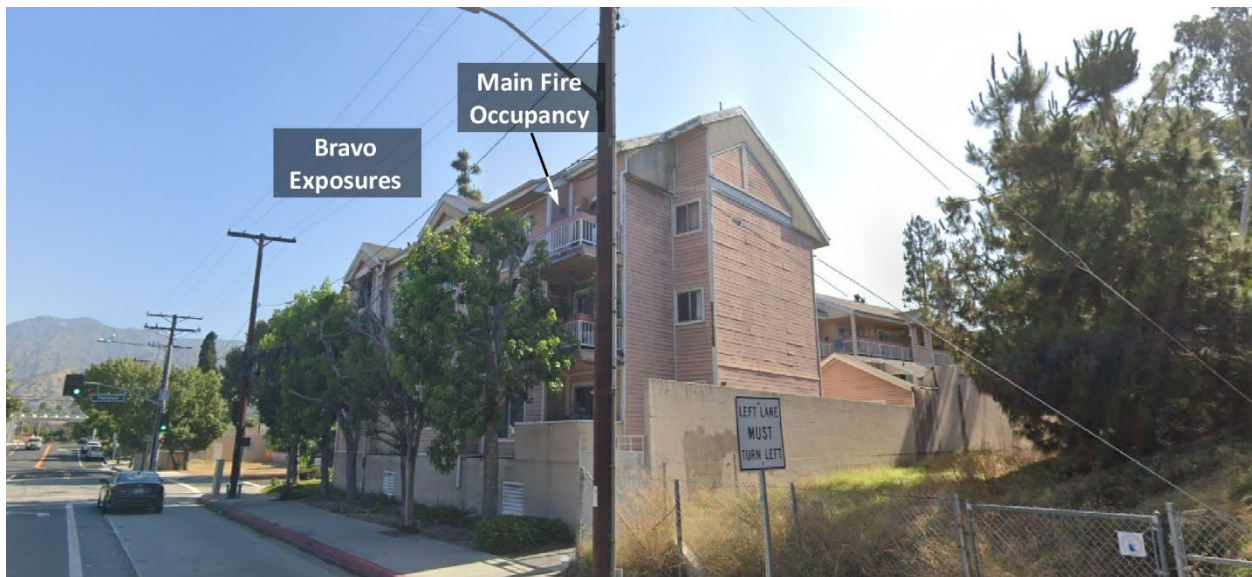
Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2024b). [Aerial view 700 Fairmont Ave, Glendale, CA].
<https://bit.ly/3Pml3vE>.

The closest hydrant is located on Concord Street at Fairmont Avenue. Additional hydrants are in the area as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 3. Alpha/Delta Corner



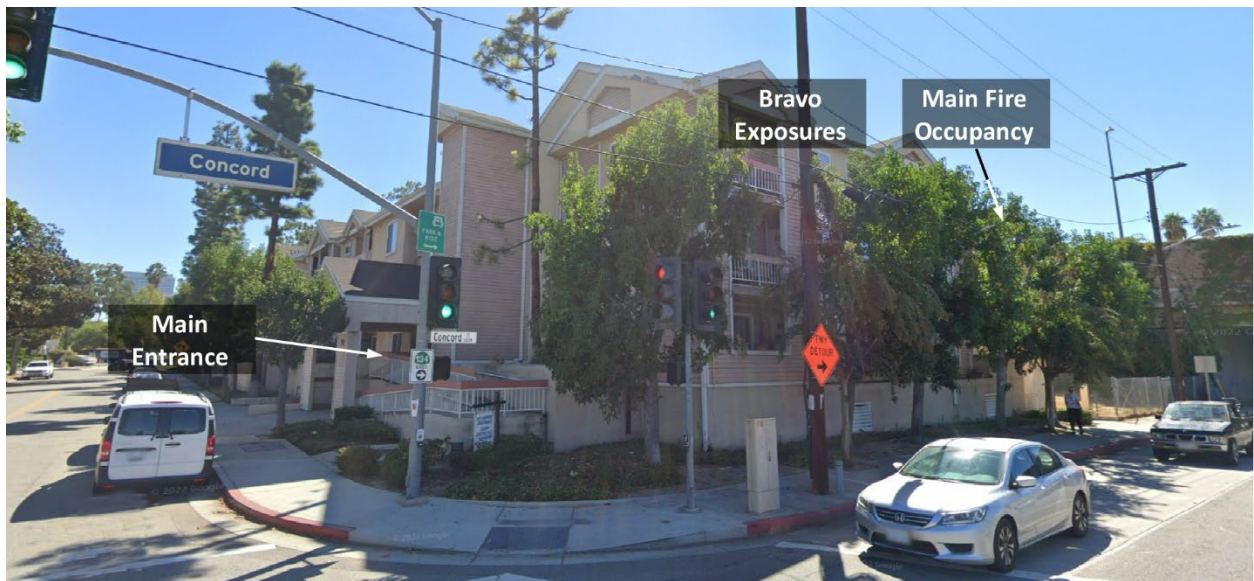
Note: Adapted from Google. (2024c). [Street view 700 Fairmont Ave, Glendale, CA].
<https://bit.ly/41W02zD>.

Figure 4. Side Alpha



Note: Adapted from Google. (2014d). [Street view 700 Fairmont Ave, Glendale, CA].
<https://bit.ly/3W87DXY>.

Figure 5. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2022a). [Street view 700 Fairmont Ave, Glendale, CA].
<https://bit.ly/4a1G4p7>.

Figure 6. Side Bravo-Main Entrance



Note: Adapted from Google. (2022b). [Street view 700 Fairmont Ave, Glendale, CA].
<https://bit.ly/3W6RWiL>.

Figure 7. Side Bravo



Note: Adapted from Google. (2022c). [Street view 700 Fairmont Ave, Glendale, CA].
<https://bit.ly/3DHuTpv>.

The temperature is currently 87° F with wind from the south southeast at 10 mph (Weather Underground, 2024). **You are the company officer of a ladder company.** It is Tuesday, October 8th, and you have been dispatched along with three engines, medic unit, and command officer at 11:45 to 700 Fairmont Ave for an apartment fire. The engines and ladder have four-person staffing¹.



Time starts now! Answer the first eight questions within the next 10 minutes. Decide and put your answers in the form of communication you would have with your crew, other companies, and the first arriving command officer. Save discussion for after answering the first eight questions.

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

You hear a command officer, three engines, an advanced life support ambulance go en route. You will arrive just prior to the first engine company, approaching from the south on Concord Street. The second engine will arrive from the north shortly after you. The command officer will arrive shortly after the second engine. All other units dispatched on the first alarm will arrive after the command officer.

While responding, dispatch advises that they have a report of a fire on a third-floor balcony facing Concord Street and that there are workers on the roof of the apartment building. Watch the [incident video](#) (The411, 2024) from 01:00 to 01:30 and examine Figure 8, illustrating conditions on arrival.

¹ If your first alarm deployment is different, use your own resource assignment and staffing with the first and second arriving resources typical for your agency (e.g., two engines vs. engine and ladder).

Figure 8. Conditions on Arrival



Note: Adapted from The411. (2024). *Pre arrival residential fire Glendale Fire Department Fairmont Ave Glendale CA* [video]. <https://bit.ly/3PpXDWn>

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 would you give your crew?

No smoke is showing from Side Bravo. Watch the [incident video](#) (The411, 2024) from 02:32 to 02:52

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. Engine 1 arrives right behind you, state the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.

7. Engine 2 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on a hydrant on Concord Street at Fairmont Avenue. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.

8. 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.



Reflect on your strategic decision-making and responses to questions one through eight before answering the next six questions. Give some thought to what cues, patterns, or anomalies (differences from conditions that you would anticipate) inform your answers.

9. What was the problem?

10. What was getting in the way of achieving your tactical priorities?

11. Was there anything in this incident that could have hurt or killed you (right now)?

12. Was it reasonable to believe that the Main Fire Occupancy was occupied?

13. Was there searchable space?

14. If you believed it was reasonable that the building was occupied and there was searchable space, what could you do about it?

Watch the [incident video](#) (The411, 2024) from 02:52 to 07:00 before answering the next several questions.

15. Did you recognize the apartment building as being center corridor design? How did (or would) this impact your choice of tactics?

16. The companies operating at this incident used an exterior stream from ground level to extinguish the fire while companies accessed the main fire occupancy from the interior and over an aerial ladder to the roof to check for extension. Is this consistent with your incident action plan? What critical factors influenced your choice of tactical assignments?

17. Did you assign a company to supply the sprinkler system fire department connection (FDC)? Why or why not?

Watch the [incident video](#) (The411, 2024) from 08:30 to 08:50 before answering the next several questions.

18. What were the potential avenues of fire spread from the exterior fire on the balcony to the interior of the apartment and/or trussloft?

Additional Learning: National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) *13R Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems in Low-Rise Residential Occupancies* (NFPA, 2022) focuses on life safety in occupied areas and allows for omissions in concealed spaces like attics. Automatic sprinklers are sometimes required on balconies and in other cases are not. Some of the balconies in the building involved in this incident had sprinklers and others, such as where the fire occurred, did not. Read [Balcony Sprinkler Requirements: NFPA 13R and the International Building Code](#) (Swanson, 2023) for an explanation of why.

Review your standard operating procedures for firefighting operations in sprinklered buildings and the importance of supporting the system by connecting fire department connection (FDC) and pumping to the system if sprinklers have activated.

Get out in your response area and perform a tactical walk around at one or more apartment buildings or complexes that have balconies and discuss alternatives for dealing with fires starting on the exterior with potential to extend to the interior or trussloft void spaces.

References

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