



In-Station Training

TM 25-33 Commercial Fire



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Purpose

Building construction and occupancy are often critical factors impacting strategic and tactical decision making. This is particularly true when the occupancy has the potential for a high fuel load (such as a furniture store), and the building is an old building of ordinary construction that may have been renovated multiple times.

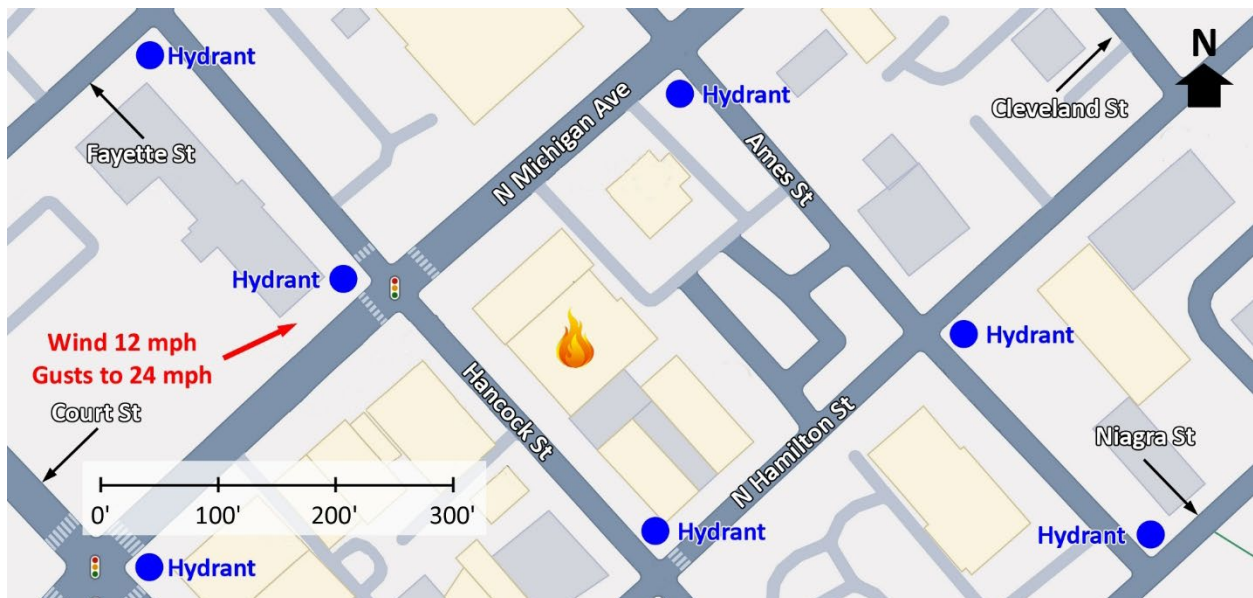
Learning Outcomes

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 commercial fire at Old Town Furniture and Mattress Company, 418 Hancock Street in Saginaw, Michigan on Saturday, July 12, 2025, at 19:27 (GTR Boy, 2025; Waterman, 2025; Shadow 18, 2025; & ABC 12, 2025). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-6) to gain an understanding of the building and area involved.

Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2025a). [Map, 418 Hancock Street, Saginaw, MI]. <https://bit.ly/47l9qzk>.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2025b). [Aerial view 418 Hancock Street, Saginaw, MI].
<https://bit.ly/45aUGBS>.

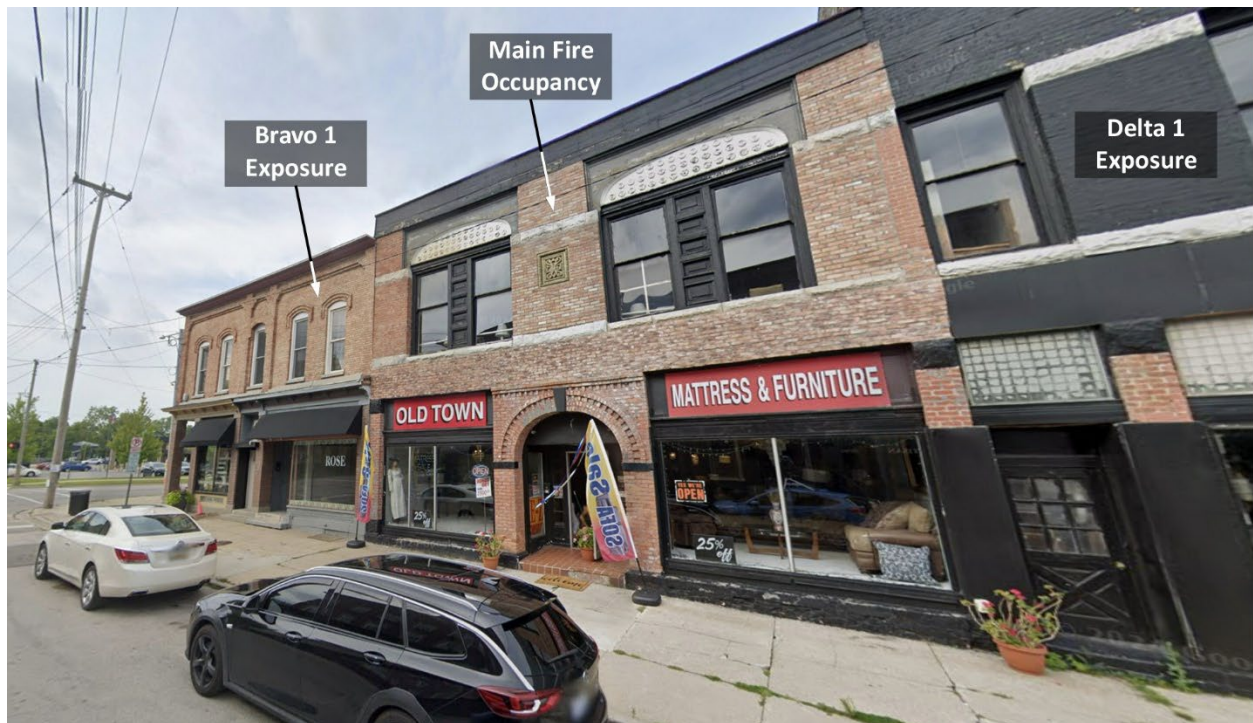
The closest hydrant is at the intersection of Hancock Street and North Michigan Avenue. There are multiple hydrants in the area as as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 3. Alpha/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023a). [Street view 418 Hancock Street, Saginaw, MI].
<https://bit.ly/45aeVzt>.

Figure 4. Side Alpha



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023b). [Street view 418 Hancock Street, Saginaw, MI].
<https://bit.ly/4mxXEGf>.

Figure 5. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023c). [Street view 418 Hancock Street, Saginaw, MI].
<https://bit.ly/4lgZpqb>.

Figure 6. Side Charlie



Note: Adapted from Google. (2025f). [3d aerial view 418 Hancock Street, Saginaw, MI].
<https://bit.ly/45xvfcD>.

The temperature is currently 80° F with wind from the west southwest at 12 mph with gusts to 24 mph (Weather Underground, 2025). **You are the company officer of an engine company.** It is Saturday, July 12th, and you have been dispatched along with two other engines, a ladder company, medic unit, and command officer to 418 Hancock Street at 19:27 for a commercial 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?

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).

You hear a command officer, two other engines, a ladder company, and an advanced life support ambulance go en route. While responding, dispatch provides an update that they are receiving calls for smoke from the Old Town Furniture and Mattress Company.

You will arrive first, approaching from the northeast on North Michigan Avenue and turning left onto Hancock Street. The ladder company will arrive from the same direction shortly after you. The second engine will arrive from the southeast several minutes after the ladder company. The command officer will arrive shortly after the second engine. All other units dispatched on the first alarm will arrive after the command officer.

Approaching Hancock Street on Michigan Avenue, you observe smoke pushing from Side Charlie of the Main Fire Occupancy. Watch the [incident video](#) (GTR Boy, 2025) from 00:05 to 00:10 and examine Figure 7, illustrating conditions on arrival.

Figure 7. Conditions on Arrival



Note: Adapted from GTR Boy. (2025). Saginaw MI (2-alarm commercial structure fire) scene. Retrieved August 10, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/46PDran>.

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?

Examine Figure 8 illustrating conditions on Side Alpha shortly after arrival (photo edited to remove tactical operations).

Figure 8. Conditions Shortly After Arrival



Note: Adapted from GTR Boy. (2025). Saginaw MI (2-alarm commercial structure fire) scene. Retrieved August 10, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/46PDran>.

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. Ladder 1 arrives and advises that they are Level 1 on North Michigan Avenue and Ames Street. 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 at North Hamilton Street and Hancock Street. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
8. Based on observed and 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?

Rewatch the [incident video](#) (GTR Boy, 2025) from 00:05 to 00:45 before answering the next question.

15. Based on the building, smoke, air track, heat, and flame indicators observed on arrival and changes occurring in between 00:05 and 00:45, where do you think the fire is located, what is its burning regime (fuel or ventilation limited), and how would you anticipate the fire developing absent effective water application?

Watch the [incident video](#) (GTR Boy, 2025) from 00:45 to 05:00 and a second segment of the [incident video](#) (GTR Boy, 2025) from 06:00 to 06:30 before answering the next several questions.

16. What building construction and occupancy factors likely presented a challenge to companies operating at this incident?
17. Was initial application of water from the exterior on Side Alpha effective? Why or why not? What factors likely influenced the effectiveness of these lines?
18. Given wind speed and direction, do you think that creating a horizontal ventilation opening on Floor 2, Side Alpha was effective? Why or why not? What tactical options may have been more effective for post fire control ventilation?

Additional Learning: Get out in your response area and conduct a tactical preplanning walkthrough of a building of Ordinary (Type III) Construction. Focus discussion with your crew on the characteristics and challenges presented by this type of construction (particularly in older renovated buildings). Alternately, conduct a tactical preplanning walkthrough of a furniture store or similar occupancy. Focus discussion with your crew on how the layout and configuration of the occupancy would impact offensive firefighting operations (think about fuel load, shielded fires, and the challenges of moving lines with a complex floor plan or layout).

References

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