



In-Station Training

TM 25-37 Residential Fire



Author

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Purpose

Legacy homes often have small rooms and narrow hallways, when companies encounter hoarding conditions, fire control and search operations are further complicated.

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 residential fire at 299 King Road, West Chester, Pennsylvania on Monday, April 14, 2025, at 06:19 (Chesco Fire Rescue Photography, 2025; Philly FireFeed, 2025; & Lardani, 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, 299 King Road, West Chester, PA]. <https://bit.ly/4nm5gMr>.

The closest hydrant is on King Road to the east of the incident, and a second hydrant is available to the northwest on Wayne Court at North Pullman Drive as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2025b). [Aerial view 299 King Road, West Chester, PA].
<https://bit.ly/3V6kk4V>.

Figure 3. Alpha/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2024a). [Street view 299 King Road, West Chester, PA].
<https://bit.ly/4m5rD7N>.

Figure 4. Side Alpha



Note: Adapted from Google. (2024b). [Street view 299 King Road, West Chester, PA].
<https://bit.ly/3JT4CYx>,

Figure 5. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023). [Street view 299 King Road, West Chester, PA].
<https://bit.ly/465IKS0>.

Figure 6. Charlie/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023). [3d aerial view 299 King Road, West Chester, PA].

<https://bit.ly/4m9RhID>.

The temperature is currently 44° F with no appreciable wind from the north (Weather Underground, 2025). **You are the company officer of an engine company.** It is Monday, April 14th, and you have been dispatched along with two other engines, a ladder company, medic unit, and command officer to 299 King Road at 06:19 for a residential 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 police report that the house is fully involved.

You will arrive first, approaching from the east on King Road. The ladder company will arrive from the west shortly after you. The second engine will arrive from the west on King Road 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.

Watch the first 00:20 of the [incident video](#) (Chesco Fire Rescue Photography, 2025) and examine Figure 7, illustrating conditions on arrival.

Figure 7. Conditions on Arrival



Note: Adapted from Chesco Fire Rescue Photography. (2025). 4 am house fire King Road West Whiteland Township [video]. <https://bit.ly/4glUnli>.

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?

Conditions on Side Charlie are consistent with those observed from Side Alpha with flames from a window on the Bravo/Charlie Corner. A window on Side Delta on the Alpha/Delta Corner is starting to fail with flames from the window. Smoke is pushing from the windows on Floor 2 (Bravo, Charlie, and Delta Sides). Bystanders report that “everyone is out” but their location and status is unknown.

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 King Road at Bonnie Blink Drive. 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 to the east on King Road. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
8. Based on 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?

Important! In some cases, videos used in 10-Minute Trainings show less than ideal emergency operations. Remember that no firefighter or fire officer goes to an incident wanting to do a poor job. There are many factors that may influence incident operations and video or a still photograph seldom, if ever provide the entire story. Keep in mind that videos or photos of real incidents are used to provide a learning context. Keep the following in mind as you complete the remainder of this 10-Minute Training:

- Firefighters and officers all want to do excellent work (no one wants to do a bad job, to be injured, or to die during incident operations).
- Firefighters and officers generally perform the way that they are trained and/or consistent with the (stated or unstated) expectations of their organization.
- There are many ways to go about the business of firefighting. Many are “right”, and some are “wrong” but be careful not to assume that different is incorrect just because it is different.

Watch the [incident video](#) (Chesco Fire Rescue Photography, 2025) from 00:20 to 02:00 and examine the two photos in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Quick Hit from Side Alpha



Note: Adapted from Chesco Fire Rescue Photography. (2025). *4 am house fire King Road West Whiteland Township* [video]. <https://bit.ly/4gUnli>.

The quick hit (exterior water application) started at approximately 01:36 in the incident video. Water was applied for approximately 11 seconds. The photo on the right, at 02:00 in Figure 8 illustrates conditions as the first line prepares to force the door and make entry 13 seconds after water application through the window on Side Alpha was stopped.

15. What factors may have influenced the ineffectiveness of the quick hit from Side Alpha and quick regrowth of the fire? How might the effectiveness of exterior water application have been increased, given the conditions presented in this incident?

Watch the [incident video](#) (Chesco Fire Rescue Photography, 2025) from 02:00 to 03:45.

16. What factors may have impacted the delay in forcing the door on Side Alpha? How could these factors be addressed?
17. How could exterior water application and forcible entry have been coordinated to improve the effectiveness of fire control operations?
18. If you encountered hoarding conditions after making entry through Side Alpha, how would you communicate this to the IC? State the radio communication exactly as you would transmit it.

Watch the [incident video](#) (Chesco Fire Rescue Photography, 2025) from 03:45 to 06:00.

19. What building construction, interior layout, and other conditions may have influenced the sustained fire in the Alpha/Delta corner of the building after an attack line was stretched through the door on Side Alpha? How might these issues have been addressed to control the fire in this area.

If you have time, watch the remainder of the [incident video](#) (Chesco Fire Rescue Photography, 2025) as there are several other lessons that can be learned. Consider the coordination of fire control and ventilation along with ventilation tactics as you watch this video segment.

Additional Learning: Clear and concise communications are essential to effective fireground operations. Listen to the [radio communications](#) (Philly FireFeed, 2025) from this incident and consider the following:

- Did the initial radio report provide a clear picture of the problem and action being taken? Was command clearly established by the first arriving company? How was command transferred?
- Was this a one story, two story, or one and a half story house? Why does this matter?
- Were tactical assignments clear? Note that some of the assignments were likely made face to face? How does communicating tactical assignments over the radio improve situational awareness for all companies on the fireground?

Listen to your own incident radio communications on a regular basis and identify where you did well and where you can improve!

There were several task level challenges during this incident including effective exterior water application, forcible entry, and vertical ventilation. Get out on the drill ground with your crew and spend some time working on critical task level skills with an eye to continuous improvement!

References

Chesco Fire Rescue Photography. (2025). *4 am house fire King Road West Whiteland Township* [video]. Retrieved September 10, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/4glUnli>.

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