



In-Station Training

TM 25-41 Residential Fire



Author

Chief Ed Hartin

Purpose

There is always more than one way to accomplish safe and effective operations on the fireground. It is not only important to know what to do and how to do it, but also why we do things the way that we do. This “routine” incident provides an opportunity to think about this.

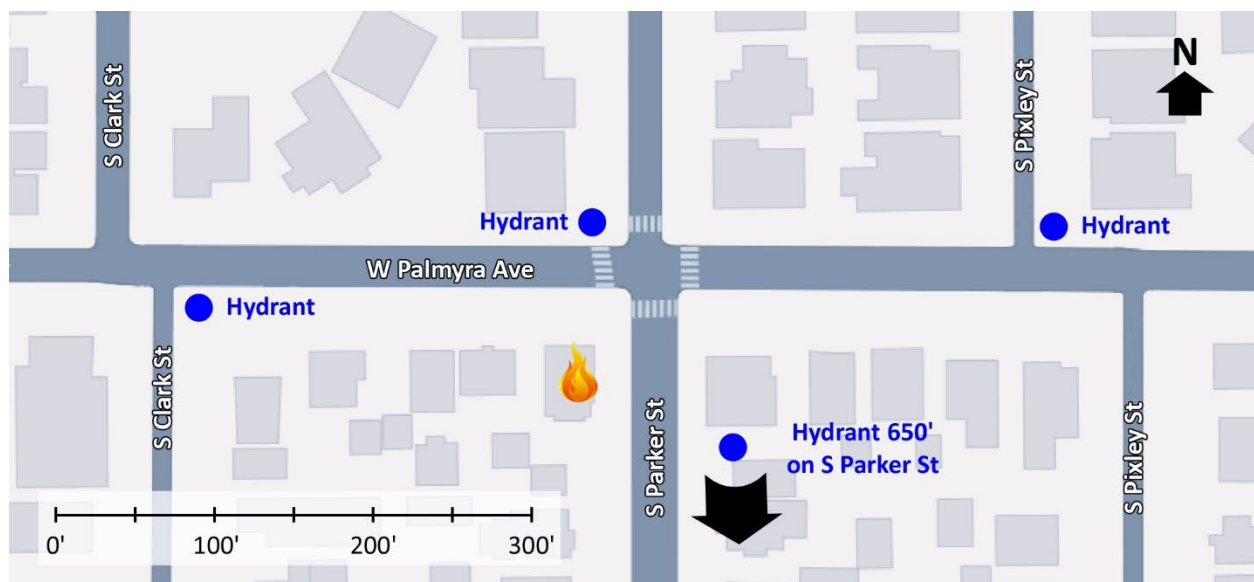
Learning Outcomes

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 at 704 West Palmyra Avenue, Orange City, California on Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at 12:54 (TheContentExchange, 2025; OCFD, 2025; Broadcastify, 2025a, Broadcastify, 2025b, & Broadcastify, 2025c). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-7) to gain an understanding of the building and area involved.

Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2025a). [Map, 704 West Palmyra Avenue, Orange City, CA].

<https://bit.ly/46QTJhF>.

The closest hydrant is on West Palmyra Avenue directly across the street from the main fire occupancy. Additional hydrants are in the area as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2025b). [Aerial view 704 West Palmyra Avenue, Orange City, CA].
<https://bit.ly/4nShcpp>.

Figure 3. Alpha/Delta Corner



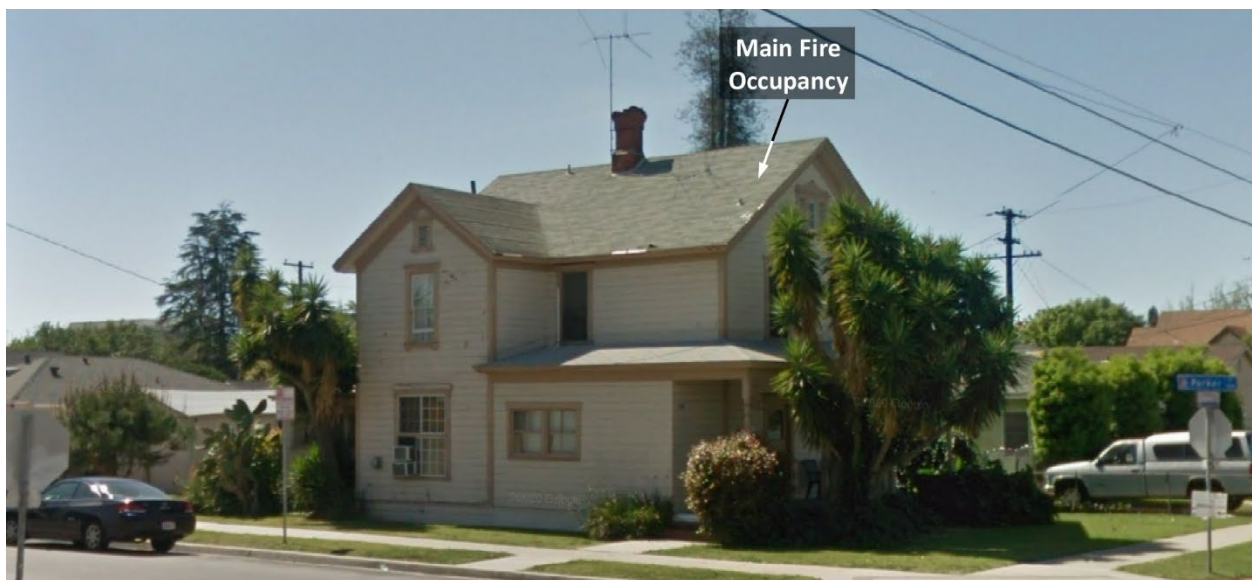
Note: Adapted from Google. (2019a). [Street view 704 West Palmyra Avenue, Orange City, CA].
<http://bit.ly/3ID8AEo>.

Figure 4. Side Alpha



Note: Adapted from Google. (2019b). [Street view 704 West Palmyra Avenue, Orange City, CA].
<https://bit.ly/4o1BH3f>.

Figure 5. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2015a). [Street view 704 West Palmyra Avenue, Orange City, CA].
<https://bit.ly/3KuSzRm>.

Figure 6. Bravo/Charlie Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2015b). [Street view 704 West Palmyra Avenue, Orange City, CA]. <https://bit.ly/4pNGFID>.

Figure 7. Side Charlie (Post Fire)



Note: Adapted from Zillow. (2025). 704 W Palmyra Ave, Orange, CA 92868. <https://bit.ly/3IO0NDC>.

The temperature is currently 54° F with wind from the southeast at 7 mph (Weather Underground, 2025). **You are the company officer of an engine company.** It is Wednesday, February 12th, and you are dispatched along with **two other engines, a ladder company**, medic unit, and **command officer** to 704 W Palmyra Ave at 12:54 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?

You hear a command officer, two other engines, a ladder company, and an advanced life support ambulance go en route. Shortly after going enroute, dispatch provides an update that they are receiving multiple calls, that this may be an “apartment complex” and that everyone is out.

You will approach the incident location on West Palmyra Avenue from the west and will arrive first. The first ladder company will arrive from the same direction shortly after you. The second engine will arrive from the east on West Palmyra Avenue three 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.

Examine Figure 8 illustrating conditions on arrival and watch the first 00:22 of the [incident video](#) (TheContentExchange, 2025).

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 TheContentExchange. (2025). *Fire rips through older home in Orange, CA.*
<https://bit.ly/46BfsK8>.

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?

Shortly after exiting the apparatus, you receive a report of two civilians on Side Charlie having trouble breathing. Conditions on Sides Charlie and Delta are consistent with those observed on Sides Alpha and Bravo and you locate two adults, one male and the other female on Side Charlie who are conscious and alert but are experiencing moderate difficulty breathing.

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 follow up report exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch.
6. Ladder 1 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 at West Palmyra Avenue and South Clark 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 on West Palmyra Avenue at South Pixley Street. 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. Think about 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 remainder of the [incident video](#) (TheContentExchange, 2025) before answering the remaining questions based on actual operations at this incident.

15. The update from dispatch indicated that this might be an “apartment complex” (Broadcastify, 2025b). The first arriving company and battalion chief identified the building as a “single family dwelling” (Broadcastify, 2025b). Later in the incident, the rapid intervention crew (RIC) reported that the units on Side Charlie were “all clear” (Broadcastify, 2025b). Did you see any indicators that this house had been subdivided into apartments? How could you determine this?
16. The officer of the first arriving engine, Orange City Fire Department (OCFD) Engine 5 passed command to the next arriving engine (OCFD Engine 3) who was not yet on-scene, assigning them “command and RIC and secure a water supply” (Broadcastify, 2025b). While this allowed the company officer to focus on task level work, what are the potential disadvantages of passing command to a unit that is not yet on-scene or who has just arrived?
17. The first arriving engine stretched an attack line through the door on Side Alpha. Did you make a quick hit (exterior water application) before stretching an attack line to the interior or did you use the same tactical approach as OCFD Engine 5? What critical factors influenced your decision?
18. After transfer of command from IC #1 (OCFD Engine 3), IC #2 (OCFD Battalion 1) assigned the captain of the first arriving engine (OCFD Engine 5) as the fire attack group supervisor and specified the objectives of primary search and fire suppression and subsequently assigned the third arriving engine (Orange County Fire Department (OCofD) Engine 70) to the fire attack group (Broadcastify, 2025b). While the captain of Engine 5 may be able to coordinate the actions of his company (his firefighter and himself) and Engine 70, what obstacles would the captain face in performing the tactical supervision and embedded safety function of a division supervisor?

19. IC #2 assigned the second arriving engine (OCFD Engine 3) as RIC and asked them to perform a 360. What are the potential problems that could result from IC #1 not performing 360-degree reconnaissance before committing to interior operations?

20. IC #2 assigned the first arriving ladder company (OCFD Truck 1) as “ventilation group” to perform vertical ventilation coordinated with the fire attack group. How does designation of a single company as a “group” impact on IC #2’s span-of-control and the quality and effectiveness of tactical supervision?

21. If you had stretched an attack line to Floor 2 for fire control and primary search, 1) what would indicate a need for vertical ventilation, and 2) if vertical ventilation was indicated, how would you coordinate with the ladder company on the roof? 3) given the location of the fire and incident conditions, what other tactical ventilation options may have been an effective alternative to vertical ventilation?

Additional Learning: Two additional learning opportunities with this 10-Minute Training:

Two approaches to incident command were developed in the 1970s, Chief Alan Brunacini developed Fire Command in Phoenix, AZ and the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS) was developed by a consortium of agencies in Southern California. What was the difference between Fire Command and NIIMS? Fireground command was developed with a primary focus on structure fires based on the eight functions of command. NIIMS was developed to deal with interagency operations at large wildland fires. While differing in original purpose and function, these two systems have many commonalities and some differences. Post 9/11, the federal government adapted a variation of NIIMS and changed the name to the National Incident Management System to deal with large, complex, Type III, II, and I incidents. Many agencies use organizational tools within NIMS to address everyday Type IV and V incidents like structure fires. Blue Card evolved out of Fireground Command, providing a comprehensive system of incident management based on the eight functions of command which provide guidance and additional tools that are effective when dealing with these Type IV and V incidents. NIMS and Blue Card are compatible, but it is important to recognize that the incident organizational tools like sections, branches, and division and groups are common to both systems, but they are use somewhat differently based on the size, scope, complexity, and duration of Type IV, V, III, II, and I incidents.

Tactical supervision should be implemented to increase the effectiveness of incident operations and/or the safety of companies operating at an incident. Listen to [Assigning a Division Boss](#) on the B-Shifter

Podcast excellent for insights into effective use of incident organization. Note: Within the structural firefighting context of Blue Card, divisions are used in the hazard zone to maximize accountability for position and function while groups may be used outside the hazard zone for functional organizational assignments (but are not used in the hazard zone).

In this incident, there was a hydrant directly across the street from the main fire occupancy. Discuss the role of the apparatus operator of the attack engine and how this individual can maximize effectiveness and efficiency on the fireground. Take your company out and work on these critical apparatus operator skills.

- The water supply tactic of “on a hydrant” where the apparatus operator supplies an attack line and then establishes his or her own water supply. What is the maximum distance that the apparatus operator can stretch their own supply line?
- Depending on timing of the arrival of additional resources, what other task level action can the apparatus operator take to speed incident operations? Add stretching a second attack line to the point of entry to the “on a hydrant” water supply tactic.

References

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