In-Station Training

TM 26-14 Residential Fire

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Purpose

Knowledge, skill, and efficient teamwork are essential to achieving quick water on the fire and effective distribution. Making a quick hit from the exterior requires rapid transition to the interior to minimize regrowth.

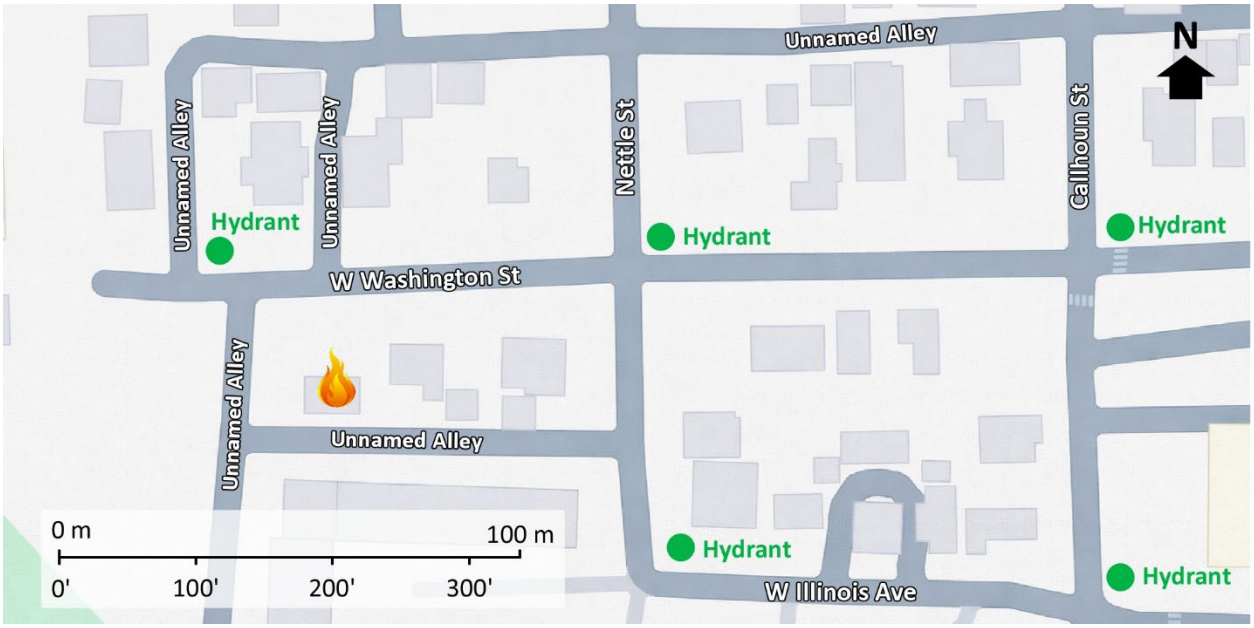
Learning Outcomes

Initial incident commanders 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 519 West Washington Street in Morris, Illinois on Sunday, December 14, 2025, at 12:39 (Mabs21, 2025; County Herald Police Reports, 2025; WCSJ Radio, 2025 & 2025b). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-5) to gain an understanding of the building and area involved.

Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026a). [Map, 519 West Washington Street, Morris, IL]. Map data ©2026 Google. https://bit.ly/4uKP1x1.

The closest hydrant is on West Washington Street just to the west of the incident location as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. Other hydrants in the area are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Aerial View

Note: Adapted from Google. (2026b). [Aerial view 519 West Washington Street, Morris, IL]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. https://bit.ly/40NOAUV.

Figure 3. Side Alpha

Note: Adapted from Zillow: (2022). 519 W Washington St, Morris, IL 60450. from https://bit.ly/482uGt8

Figure 4. Bravo/Charlie Corner

Note: Adapted from Zillow: (2022). 519 W Washington St, Morris, IL 60450. from https://bit.ly/482uGt8

Figure 5. Charlie/Delta Corner

Note: Adapted from Zillow: (2022). 519 W Washington St, Morris, IL 60450. from https://bit.ly/482uGt8

This incident is located near the western edge of Morris's downtown corridor in a mixed-use area where residential streets transition into commercial development. The immediate area includes small

businesses, offices, and service occupancies interspersed with older detached single-family homes, duplexes, and small multifamily buildings, many constructed between the late 1800s and 1900s. Most single-family homes are owner-occupied with some rental properties in mixed-use areas. The population reflects generally stable, long-term residency. English is the predominant language, with a small number of households speaking other languages. (Open AI, 2026). Fire and emergency medical call volume in this area is typical of other areas of the community.

The temperature is currently 1° F (-17° C) with wind from the west northwest at 7 mph (11 kph). (Weather Underground, 2026). It is Sunday, December 14th and you are dispatched to a residential fire at 519 West Washington Street along with two other engines, a ladder company, medic unit, and command officer at 12:39. The engines and ladder have four-person staffing[1]. **You are the officer of the first arriving engine company**.

Time starts now! Answer the first nine questions within the next 10 minutes. Save discussion until after you have answered these questions.

While responding, you hear the other engines, ladder, medic unit, and command officer go enroute and dispatch provides an update that callers are reporting “active flames coming out of the window, unknown if anyone is inside as well”.

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

2. Based on the dispatch information and what you know about this occupancy and response area, what do anticipate finding on arrival?

Important! Answer questions three through nine in the form of communication you would have with your crew, dispatch, other companies, and the first arriving command officer. State the communications exactly as you would say them face-to-face or over the radio. Save explanation or discussion until after you have completed these questions.

[1] If your first alarm deployment is different, use your own resource assignment and staffing.

You anticipate the ladder company will arrive several minutes after you, followed by the second arriving engine, and command officer. The third arriving engine will arrive after the command officer.

Watch the first 00:35 of the incident video (mabas21, 2025) and examine Figure 6 illustrating conditions on arrival. Click the link above or scan the QR code to access the video.

Figure 6. Conditions on Arrival

Note: Adapted from mabas21. (2025). *Working house fire In Morris Illinois On 12-14-25* [video]. https://bit.ly/4t7n692

3. State your initial radio report (IRR) exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch.

4. 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 a large volume of light grey smoke pushing from the building at moderate velocity.

5. Would you change the action you are taking or modify the assignments given to your crew? If so, what task orders would you provide?

6. State your follow up report exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch.

7. Ladder 1 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 at West Washington and Nettle. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.

8. Engine 2 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on a hydrant at West Washington and Nettle. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.

9. 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 nine before answering the next eight questions. Think about what cues, patterns, or anomalies (differences from conditions that you would anticipate) informed your answers.

10. What information most influenced your expectations?

11. Did anything in the incident post-arrival challenge your initial expectations?

12. What was the actual problem once you arrived?

13. What were your tactical priorities and what was getting in the way of achieving them?

14. During initial operations, was there an immediate threat of serious injury or death to you, your crew, or other companies?

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

16. Was there searchable space?

17. If you believed it was reasonable that there was searchable space, what could you do about it?

In this incident, the first arriving engine pulled past the Main Fire Occupancy, positioning at the hydrant at West Washington and the Unnamed Alley and stretched an attack line on Side Alpha. Watch the incident video (mabas21, 2025) from 01:10 to 06:00 before answering the remaining questions. Click the link above or scan the QR code to access the video.

18. What factors may have influenced the time between arrival of the first engine company and water on the fire? How could the time to achieve water on the fire have been reduced?

19. How could the effectiveness of the exterior water application have been improved? Think about position of the nozzle, pattern, and movement of the stream.

20. What factors were likely to have influenced regrowth of the fire between the time that the nozzle firefighter made a quick hit through the window and the line entering the building? What are two ways that this regrowth could have been limited?

Additional Learning: Effective water application from the exterior or interior requires a solid understanding of methods of water application, their purpose, and water mapping (where the water goes). Water may be applied to cool hot gases, hot surfaces, or both. For maximum efficiency, water must be vaporized into steam, but where this happens makes a difference. Water vaporized in the hot gases results in contraction of the gas layer. If the water is vaporized on hot surfaces, the mix of steam and hot gases expands. Any stream of water moving through an opening entrains air. Fog streams move the most air, but straight or solid streams that are moved quickly (side to side or around in a circle) also move significant air. The further back from the opening that the nozzle is, the more air that will be entrained. Are steam production and air entrainment a problem? Not necessarily, it depends on what you are trying to accomplish. Knowing what you are trying to accomplish is the most important thing, followed by knowing how water and fire streams work.

Discuss the following exterior water application methods with your crew:

1. Apply a straight (or solid) stream of water at a steep angle through the opening and don't move the stream around (if the opening is large, you may want to slowly move the nozzle from one side to the other, but don's move it quickly).
2. If you can access the opening, move up and put the nozzle inside the window and use a narrow fog or straight stream, rotating it to apply water to all the hot surfaces inside the compartment (you might do this immediately if fire conditions allow you to get close to the window). The important thing is to get the nozzle inside the opening to minimize air entrainment).
3. If you can't get close or the opening is on an upper floor, start with a steep stream angle and apply water inside the window, then pull the stream back to bounce it off the lintel (top of the opening) to reduce the velocity of the stream and deflect water into the compartment.

How long does it take your crew to get an attack line into operation and get water on the fire? Get out and train on this and identify ways that you can improve your efficiency and reduce the time necessary to get the line into operation for an exterior quick hit and then transition to the interior.

- Time to get the attack line off your apparatus and in position?
- Time to mask up and get water on the line?
- Time to bleed air from the line and get water on the fire?
- Time to gain access to the interior (door unlocked vs forcible entry)?

Practice the three water application methods (if you don't have a training facility, you will have to use your imagination, but work on the skills related to moving the attack line, positioning, and moving the nozzle).

References

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