



In-Station Training

TM 26-20 High-Rise Fire



10Author

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Purpose

Tall buildings present significant challenges during firefighting operations due to occupant egress, firefighter access, particularly under high wind conditions and when the building is under renovation.

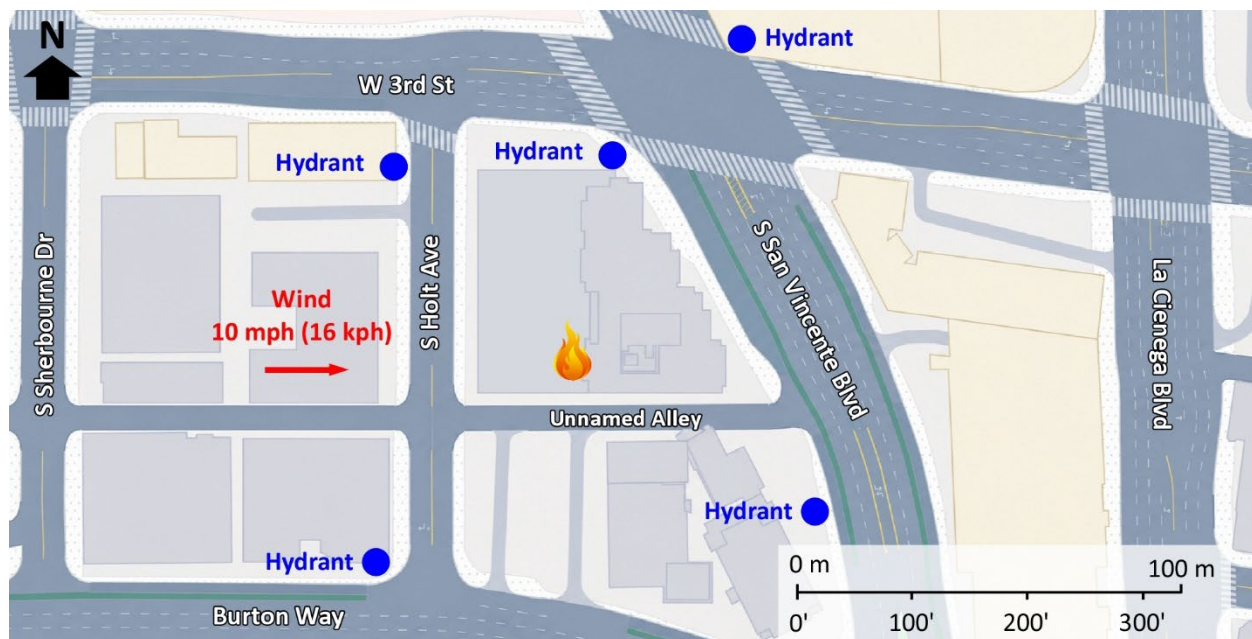
Learning Outcomes

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 high-rise fire at Westbury Terrace Condominiums, 321 S San Vicente Boulevard in Los Angeles, California on Monday, April 20, 2026, at 18:49 (90210 FireBuff, 2026; Los Angeles Fire Department, 2026; & Broadcastify, 2026a & 2026b). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-9) to gain an understanding of the building and area involved.

Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026a). [Map, 321 S San Vicente Boulevard in Los Angeles, CA]. Map data ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/3PtnhNw>.

The closest hydrant is at the intersection of S San Vicente Boulevard and West 3rd Street. Hydrants in the area are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 2. Aerial/Pre-Plan View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026b). [Aerial view 321 S San Vicente Boulevard in Los Angeles, CA]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. <https://bit.ly/49BKSIZ>.

Figure 3. Alpha/Bravo Corner



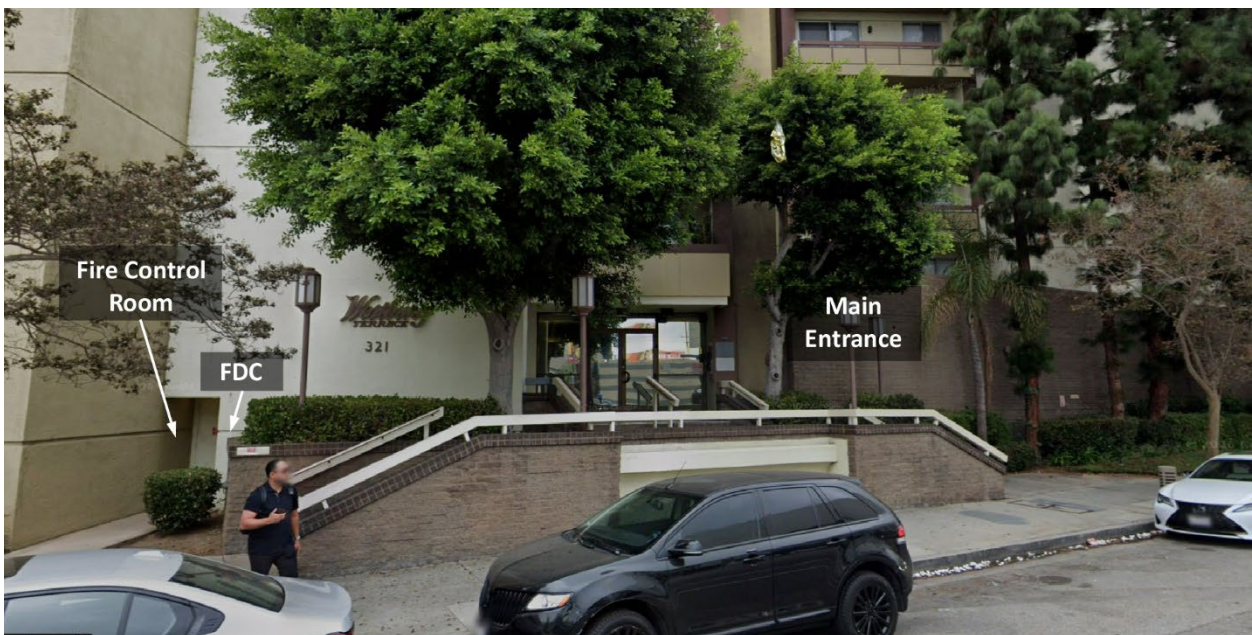
Note: Adapted from Google. (2025a). [Street view 321 S San Vicente Boulevard in Los Angeles, CA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/48PqiOJ>.

Figure 4. Bravo/Charlie Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2025b). [Street view 321 S San Vicente Boulevard in Los Angeles, CA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/3ORZPcJ>.

Figure 5. Side Alpha



Note: Adapted from Google. (2025c). [Street view 321 S San Vicente Boulevard in Los Angeles, CA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4wlyhxe>.

Figure 6. Alpha/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2024a). [Street view 321 S San Vicente Boulevard in Los Angeles, CA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4dsZp5Q>.

Figure 7, Charlie/Delta Corner



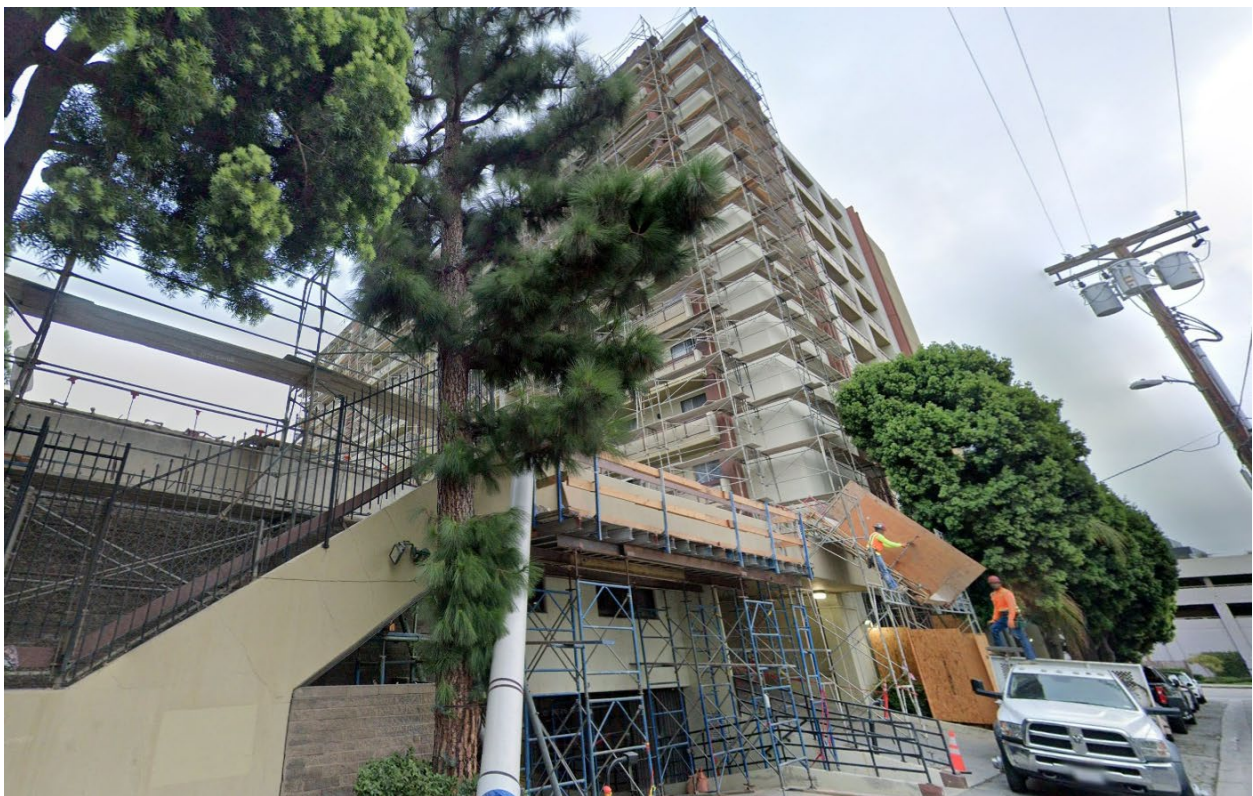
Note: Adapted from Google. (2024b). [Street view 321 S San Vicente Boulevard in Los Angeles, CA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4eRYSf9>.

Figure 8. Bravo/Charlie Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026c). [3d aerial view 321 S San Vicente Boulevard in Los Angeles, CA]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. <https://bit.ly/4to0TDj>.

Figure 9. Bravo/Charlie Corner-Under Renovation



Note: Adapted from Google. (2025d). [Street view 321 S San Vicente Boulevard in Los Angeles, CA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4d66gAN>.

Westbury Terrace Condominiums is a 13-story residential high-rise building containing 82 units. The building has an attached, one-story parking garage. The building is equipped with a combined sprinkler/standpipe system and was constructed in 1976. At the time of the incident, this building was undergoing exterior renovations.

321 S San Vicente Boulevard is in a dense mixed-use urban neighborhood characterized by commercial corridors, multifamily housing, medical offices, and nearby retail destinations. The immediate area along San Vicente Boulevard includes mid-rise commercial and office buildings, restaurants, and institutional occupancies, while adjacent residential blocks contain a mix of apartment buildings, condominiums, duplexes, and older detached homes. Much of the surrounding development dates from the 1920s through 1960s, with ongoing infill and redevelopment. Residential occupancies in the area are predominantly renter-occupied, and a population mix that includes both long-term residents and shorter-term tenancy common in urban neighborhoods. English and Spanish are widely spoken, along with a variety of other languages reflecting the city's diverse population. (Open AI, 2026). Like other densely populated areas of the community, fire and emergency medical call volume in this area is high.

The temperature is currently 65° F (18° C) with wind from the west at 10 mph (16 kph). (Weather Underground, 2026). It is Monday, April 20th and you are dispatched to a **high-rise fire** at 321 S San Vicente Boulevard along with four other engines, two ladder companies, medic unit, and two command officers at 18:49. The engines and ladder have four-person staffing¹. **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.

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

You do not receive any additional information from dispatch during response.

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

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

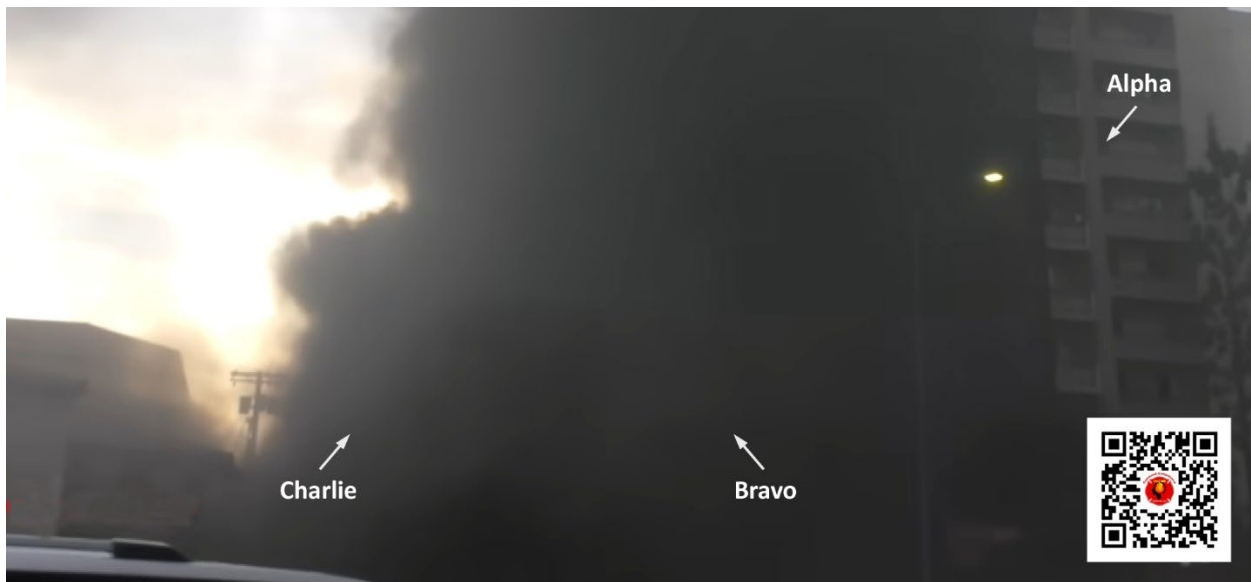


Important! Answer questions three through nine in the form of communication you would have with your crew, dispatch, other companies, and the first arriving command officer. State the communications exactly as you would say them face-to-face or over the radio. Save explanation or discussion until after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

You anticipate the second engine, and ladder company will arrive shortly after you, followed by a command officer. The remainder of the first alarm will arrive after the first command officer.

Watch the first 00:10 of the [incident video](#) (90210 FireBuff, 2026) and examine Figure 10 illustrating conditions on arrival. Click the link above or scan the QR code to access the video.

Figure 10. Conditions on Arrival Side Alpha



Note: Adapted from 90210 FireBuff. (2026). *Pre-Arrival* LAFD High-Rise Fire: Beverly Grove (FS61). <https://bit.ly/3P18fOZ>.

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?

Engine 2 arrives on South Holt Avenue and provides you with an [emergency traffic](#) radio message (Hartin, 2026). Click the link above or scan the QR code to access the audio.



5. Given the report that fire is showing on Floor 2, above the parking garage, 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. State the tactical assignment you would give Engine 2 exactly as you would transmit it.

8. Ladder 1 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on a hydrant at South San Vincente and West 3rd Street. 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 involved and/or exposed units 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?

Watch the [incident video](#) (90210 FireBuff, 2026) from 00:10 to 06:00 before answering the remaining questions. This video segment illustrates conditions on Side Bravo and the Bravo/Charlie Corner as LAFD Engine 58 arrived (designated Engine 2 in this 10-Minute Training). The video continues, showing initial incident operations on Side Charlie. Click the link above or scan the QR code to access the video.



The first alarm assignment for this incident was two light forces², two engines, two rescue ambulances, an emergency medical supervisor, and two battalion chiefs. In this incident, first arriving companies initiated high-rise operations on the interior and an exterior attack, accessing the roof of the parking garage over a portable ladder. This incident escalated to a greater alarm with response of 15 engine companies, six ladder companies, six rescue ambulances, four battalion chiefs, two assistant chiefs, and a variety of other companies and specialized resources.

18. Was the decision to deploy attack lines on the roof of the parking garage for fire control consistent with your incident action plan in this 10-Minute Training? What factors influenced your choice of fire control tactics?

19. IC#1 (Light Force 61) transitioned to “Lobby” upon arrival of the first command officer (Battalion 18). What is the function of lobby control and why is this essential in high-rise firefighting operations?

Additional Learning

The wind speed of 10 mph (16 kph) could have been a significant factor in this incident. Initial research into wind driven conditions in structure fires (Madrzykowski & Kerber, 2009a & 2009b) focused on high-rise buildings, but wind driven conditions can occur in any type of structure. Watch [Wind Effects on Structure Fires](#) (LACoFD, 2021) with your crew and discuss how to safely and effectively approach structural fire control when wind speeds exceed 10 mph.



This incident occurred on Floor 2 of a 13-story residential high-rise building, but a similar incident could occur in a mid- or low-rise residential building (which are far more common). Discuss the similarities and differences between high-rise firefighting operations and operations in mid- and low-rise multi-unit residential structures.

If you have mid- or high-rise buildings in your response area, get out and do a tactical walk around at one or more of these structures. Discuss high-rise procedures³ with the members of your crew and look closely at access challenges like those encountered during the incident in this 10-Minute Training.

² The Los Angeles City Fire Department designates an engine and aerial ladder cross staffed by a captain and five firefighters that always operate together as a light force. This is differentiated from an LAFD task force consisting of two engines and an aerial ladder.

³ Also see [10-Minute Training 26-11 High-Rise Fire](#) (Hartin, 2026b).

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