



In-Station Training

TM 26-25 Residential Fire



Author

Chief Ed Hartin

Purpose

Individually, high wind and closely spaced structures can present significant firefighting problems, but combined they dramatically increase these challenges and require adequate resources and quick, decisive action.

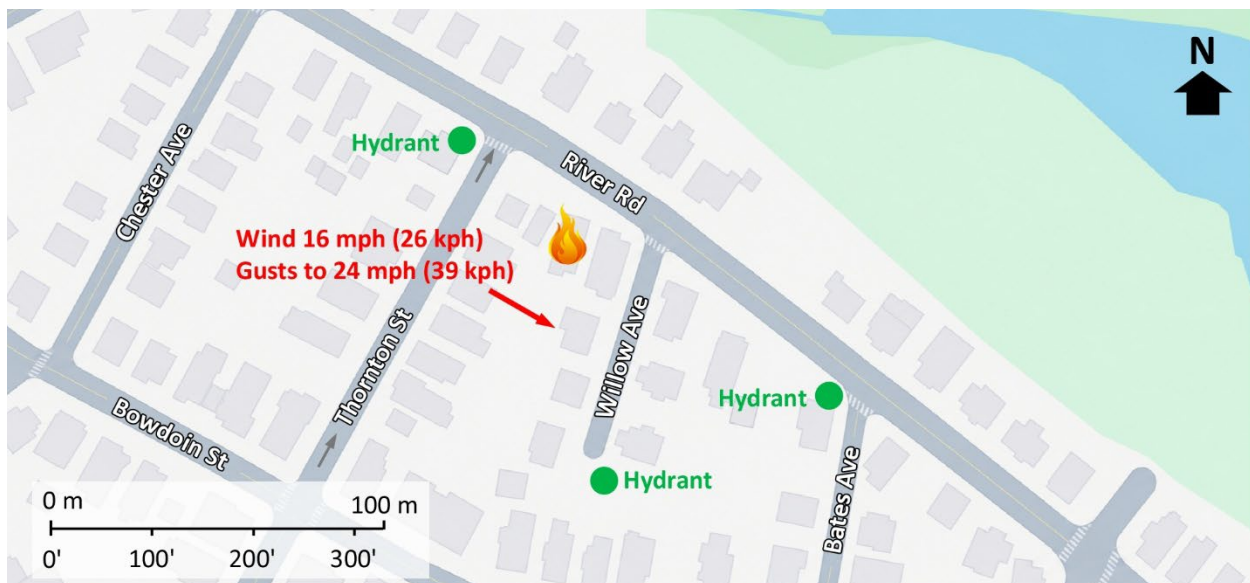
Learning Outcomes

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 149 River Road in Winthrop, Massachusetts on Saturday, June 7, 2026, at 16:30 (Boston Sparks Association, 2026; WCVB Channel 5 Boston, 2026; Mitropoulos & Clement, 2026; & Broadcastify 2026a, 2026b, 2026c, & 2026d). 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. (2026a). [Map, 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. Map data ©2026 Google.
<https://bit.ly/4uArAFu>.

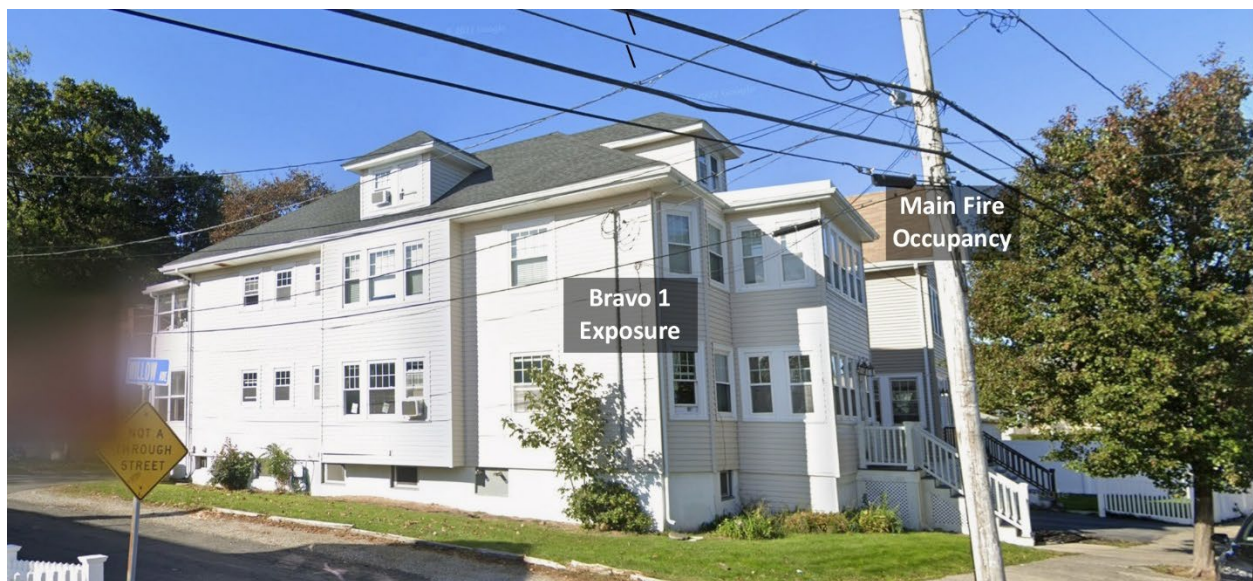
The closest hydrant is at River Road and Thornton Street and there are other hydrants in the area as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026b). [Aerial view 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. <https://bit.ly/4xsO5P6>.

Figure 3. Alpha/Bravo Corner-Bravo 1 Exposure



Note: Adapted from Google. (2021a). [Street view 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/3QCbjrU>.

Figure 4. Side Alpha



Note: Adapted from Google. (2021b). [Street view 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. ©2026 Google.
<https://bit.ly/43vCgtU>.

Figure 5. Alpha/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2021c). [Street view 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. ©2026 Google.
<https://bit.ly/4xL56o7>.

Figure 6. Bravo/Charlie Corner – Bravo 1 Exposure



Note: Adapted from Google. (2018). [Street view 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4azNZvh>,

Figure 7. Side Charlie



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026c). [3d aerial view 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. <https://bit.ly/4aLEE3u>.

The incident is in a compact coastal residential neighborhood. The area includes a mix of single-family homes and two- to four-family residential buildings on relatively small lots. Many homes in this part of Winthrop were built in the early 20th century. Residential occupancy in the area includes both owner-occupied and rental housing. English is the predominant language, with some households reflecting the

city's broader immigrant and multilingual population. (Open AI, 2026). Fire and emergency medical call volume in this area is typical of a small urban community.

The temperature is currently 75 F (24° C) with no appreciable wind from the north (Weather Underground, 2026). It is Saturday, June 7th and you are dispatched for a residential fire at 157 River Road at 16:30 along with two other engines, a ladder company, medic unit, and command officer. Your engine has four-person staffing¹. **You are the officer of the first arriving engine company.**



Time starts now! Answer the first 11 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?
2. Based on the dispatch information and what you know about this occupancy and response area, what do you anticipate finding on arrival?

As you leave the station (approximately six blocks from the incident location, you observe the conditions illustrated in Figure 8.

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

Figure 8. Smoke Conditions Visible as You Leave the Station



Note: Adapted from Metro Fire (2026). 6/7/2026 4th alarm of fire Winthrop Ma, arrival video. <https://bit.ly/4vTf0SN>. Image edited for clarity with ChatGPT 5.5, DALL·E] Open Ai, (2026).

3. How does your observation of smoke as you leave the fire station impact your assessment of critical factors and anticipation of conditions that you will find on arrival?

Dispatch advises that they are receiving numerous calls and reported entrapment.

4. What action will you take based on your observations and the additional information provided by dispatch? If you would change the resource determination and/or communicate with dispatch state the communication exactly as you would transmit it.



Important! Answer questions 5 through 11 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 will arrive from the east on River Road. You anticipate the ladder company will arrive shortly after you, followed by the second arriving engine, and command officer. The medic unit and third arriving engine will arrive after the command officer.

You arrive and determine that the actual incident address is 149 River Road with extension to 155 River Road (Bravo 1 Exposure). Watch the [incident video](#) (Metro Fire, 2026) from 00:27 to 00:47 and examine Figure 9 illustrating conditions on arrival. Click the link above or scan the QR code to access the video.

Figure 9. Conditions on Arrival



Note; Adapted from Metro Fire (2026). 6/7/2026 4th alarm of fire Winthrop Ma, arrival video. <https://bit.ly/4vTf0SN>. I

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

6. 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?

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

Observations during reconnaissance indicates that the majority of the fire is on the Bravo Side of the Main Fire Occupancy and Delta Side of the Bravo 1 Exposure with significant extension into both structures consistent with conditions illustrated in Figure 9 and the incident video.

8. State your follow up report exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch.
9. Ladder 1 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on River Road at Bates. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
10. Engine 2 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on a hydrant at River Road and Thornton. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
11. 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 1 through 11 before answering the next eight questions. Think about what cues, patterns, or anomalies (differences from conditions that you would anticipate) informed your answers.

12. What information most influenced your expectations?
13. Did anything in the incident post-arrival challenge your initial expectations?
14. What was the actual problem once you arrived?

15. What were your tactical priorities and what was getting in the way of achieving them?
16. During initial operations, was there an immediate threat of serious injury or death to you, your crew, or other companies?
17. Was it reasonable to believe that the building was occupied?
18. Was there searchable space?
19. If you believed there was searchable space and that it was reasonable that the building was occupied, what could you do about it?

The initial response for this incident was two engines and a command officer. One of responding units reported smoke showing from the station. Engine 1, the first arriving company, reported heavy smoke showing and requested a box (first alarm). Engine 1 followed up with a report of fire showing on Side Alpha. In the incident video it appears that Engine 2 is stopped at the hydrant located on River Road at Thornton Street, and the apparatus operator of Engine 1 is stretching a supply line from the front inlet towards Engine 2 and an 2 ½" (64 mm) attack line is being deployed on Side Alpha.

Watch the [incident video](#) from 00:47 to 02:50. Click the link or scan the QR code to access the video, Note that the incident audio is not necessarily synchronized with the video.



C5 the first arriving command officer assumed command on arrival and ordered a 2nd alarm. C5 reported that they had confirmation that there was no entrapment. Subsequently, C1, the fire chief then assumed command on his arrival. Neither command officer initiated a command transfer process by radio before assuming command.

This incident eventually went to a 4th alarm, but each additional alarm brought a limited number of resources (e.g., two engines and a ladder company).

20. What factors may have influenced time to effective water on the fire (which occurred after the end of the video)?

21. Do you believe that exterior fire control with a 2 ½" (64 mm) attack line would have been effective at knocking down the exterior fire on the Main Fire Occupancy and Bravo 1 Exposure? If so, why? If not, what fire control tactics may have been more effective?

22. Given the incident conditions presented and the limited resources available (two engine companies) what impact do you suspect the report that everyone was out (no entrapment) had on incident operations? What might have changed if the chief had not got a report that everyone was out?

23. What are the benefits of a formal transfer of command process in which the first arriving command officer confirms the location and function of companies operating in the hazard zone and obtains a conditions, actions, and needs (CAN) report from IC #1 (the initial IC) confirming that they are transferring command?

Additional Learning

In a high-density-built environment there is significant potential to encounter extension to exposures on arrival. This is compounded when the fire occurs during high wind conditions. This incident would have been challenging if the first alarm assignment had five engines, two ladder companies, a medic unit and two command officers. It was even more so given the limited first alarm resources.

As seen in 10-Minute Training 26-24, where a single company responded to an outside fire only to find a well involved commercial building, even well-resourced fire and rescue agencies can encounter situations where they initially have limited staffing.

Discuss your tactical options when confronted with fire conditions such as those encountered in this incident with the members of your crew. Focus on how to develop the maximum flow and potentially multiple points of application. Determine how to most effectively use your tank water while establishing a continuous water supply. Then go out on the drill ground and work on the task level skills necessary to implement these tactics.

Once you have mastered the single company options, meet with one (or more) of your neighboring companies and discuss how adding a second company can be a force multiplier. Identify how a second company changes your tactical options. Get out and work together on task level skills and coordination.

References

- Boston Sparks Association. (2026). 06/07/2026 Town of Winthrop 4th structure fire [Facebook post]. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/3S9EX1J>.
- Broadcastify. (2026a). *Winthrop Fire — 06/07/2026 04:23 PM - 04:53 PM EDT*. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/49Yxbhp>.
- Broadcastify. (2026b). *Winthrop Fire — 06/07/2026 04:53 PM - 05:23 PM EDT*. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/4vcxU7a>.
- Broadcastify. (2026c). *Winthrop Fire — 06/07/2026 05:23 PM - 05:53 PM EDT*. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/3S6QFdA>.
- Broadcastify. (2026d). *W Winthrop Fire — 06/07/2026 05:53 PM - 06:23 PM EDT*. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/4e721XA>.
- Google. (2018). [Street view 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. ©2026 Google. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/4azNZvh>,
- Google. (2021a). [Street view 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. ©2026 Google. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/3QCbjrU>.
- Google. (2021b). [Street view 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. ©2026 Google. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/43vCgtU>.
- Google. (2021c). [Street view 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. ©2026 Google. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/4xL56o7>.
- Google. (2026a). [Map, 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. Map data ©2026 Google. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/4uArAFu>.
- Google. (2026b). [Aerial view 15149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/4xsO5P6>.
- Google. (2026c). [3d aerial view 149 River Road, Winthrop, MA]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/4aLEE3u>.
- Metro Fire (2026). 6/7/2026 4th alarm of fire Winthrop Ma, arrival video. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/4vTf0SN>.
- Mitropoulos, A. & Clement, I. (2026). Baby born after mother rushed to hospital when fire tears through Winthrop home. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/449yZk6>.
- OpenAI. (2026). *ChatGPT 5.2* [Large language model]. Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://chat.openai.com/chat>.

WCVB Channel 5 Boston. (2026). 4-alarm fire breaks out, burns at least 2 homes, car in Winthrop.
Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/4uvdJ33>.

Weather Underground (2026). *East Boston, MA weather history* [historical weather June 7, 2026].
Retrieved June 14, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/4v9KLH1>.

Build command competence through weekly practice.

Receive a link to each new 10-Minute Training tactical decision game by email.

[Click here](#) or scan the QR code to subscribe.

