



In-Station Training

TM 26-28 Residential Fire



Author

Chief Ed Hartin

Purpose

Fireground operations are impacted by staffing, deployment, and the spread of task, tactical, and strategic capability of responding resources.

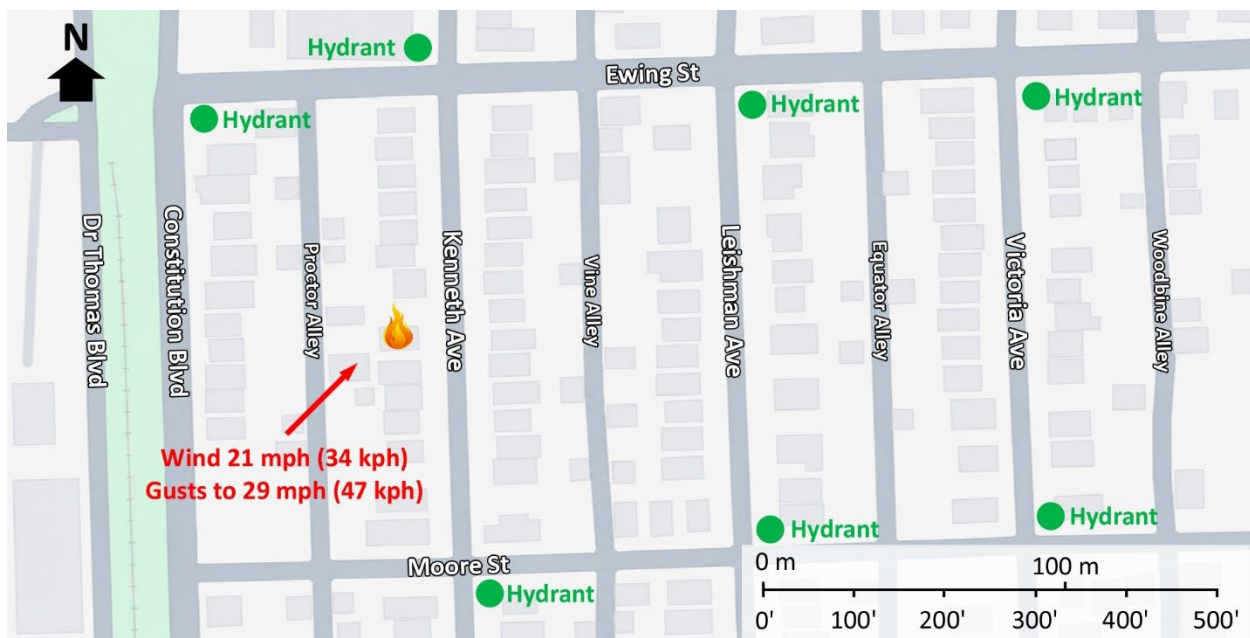
Learning Outcomes

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 2015 Kenneth Avenue, Arnold, Pennsylvania on June 20, 2026, at 15:30 (Matto, 2026; Rittmeyer, 2026; & WTAE-TV Pittsburg, 2026). 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. (2026a). [Map, 2015 Kenneth Avenue, Arnold, PA]. Map data ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4xVBRit>.

The closest hydrant is at Moore Street and Kenneth Avenue and there are other hydrants in the area as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026b). [Aerial view 2015 Kenneth Avenue, Arnold, PA]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. <https://bit.ly/4vJZhFX>.

Figure 3. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2021a). [Street view 2015 Kenneth Avenue, Arnold, PA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4azJiSd>.

Figure 4. Side Alpha



Note: Adapted from Google. (2021b). [Street view 2015 Kenneth Avenue, Arnold, PA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4vGi3xH>.

Figure 5. Alpha/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2021c). [Street view 2015 Kenneth Avenue, Arnold, PA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4xURLxv>. Image edited for clarity with ChatGPT 5.5, DALL·E] Open Ai, (2026).

Figure 6. Side Charlie



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026). [3d aerial view 2015 Kenneth Avenue, Arnold, PA]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. <https://bit.ly/4oYeAs3>. & Zillow (2026). 2015 Kenneth Ave, Arnold, PA 15068. <https://bit.ly/3QDgn9f>. Image edited to provide ground level view with ChatGPT 5.5, DALL·E] Open Ai, (2026).

The incident is in an older, compact residential neighborhood. The area consists primarily of closely spaced single-family homes and small residential buildings on a traditional street grid. Many homes in this part of the city were built in the early 20th century. Residential occupancy includes both owner-occupied and rental housing. English is the predominant language in the community (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 wind from the southwest at 21 mph (34 kph) with gusts to 29 mph (47 kph) (Weather Underground, 2026). It is Saturday, June 20th and you are dispatched for a residential fire at 2015 Kenneth Avenue at 15:30 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 nine questions within the next ten minutes. Save discussion until after you have answered these questions.

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

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

Dispatch advises that they are receiving numerous calls for flames and smoke from the house at the reported incident address.

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

You will arrive from the south on Kenneth Avenue. 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. Examine Figures 7 and 8 illustrating conditions on approach and as you arrive. You will view the incident video later in this training.

Figure 7. Conditions on Approach



Note: Adapted from Matto. S. (2026). *Structure fire – Keneth Ave, Arnold, PA* [video].

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

Figure 8. Conditions on Arrival



Note: Adapted from Matto. S. (2026). *Structure fire – Keneth Ave, Arnold, PA* [video].
<https://bit.ly/4elfDJa>

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?

Exiting the apparatus, you observe that the electrical service drop which is located on the Alpha/Bravo corner of the house has burned through and a potentially live electrical line is hanging from the tree on Side Alpha near the chain link fence.

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?

No smoke or flames are visible from Side Charlie. All other conditions are consistent with your observations on from the Alpha/Bravo Corner (Figure 8).

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 on Moore Street and Kenneth Avenue. 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 on Moore Street and Kenneth Avenue. 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 1 through 9 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 building was occupied?
16. Was there searchable space?
17. If you believed there was searchable space and that it was reasonable that the building was occupied, what could you do about it?

Important! In some cases, videos and incident audio 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.

The Arnold Volunteer Fire Department (Arnold Volunteer Engine Company No. 2) operates an engine, tower ladder and air unit (Firefighting Wiki, n.d.). The city of Arnold previously had two volunteer fire companies serving the city, but Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 was decertified by the city due to a lack of staffing in 2023 (Rittmeyer, 2023). Agencies in Westmoreland County participate in both automatic and mutual aid. In this incident, the response chief, several chief officers from other agencies, and other fire department personnel were on scene prior to the arrival of the first engine.

Watch the [incident video](#) (Matto, 2026) from 00:25 to 07:32. Click the link or scan the QR code to access the video. As you watch this video of initial incident operations, focus your thoughts on the operations of the first arriving engine company. 10-Minute Training 26-28a will take a second look at this incident in the context of a command officer arriving first (as occurred in the actual incident).



18. Based on the Building, Environment, Smoke, Air Track, Heat and Flame (BE-SHAF) indicators observed in the first several minutes of the incident video, what was the location and extent of the fire? What were likely avenues of fire extension? What was the potential influence of wind conditions?

The incident commander tasked the first arriving engine with making a “blitz attack” (typically exterior water application, typically with a master stream or high flow handline) and the first arriving engine stretched a 1 ¾” (45 mm) attack line through the interior (it is unknown if orders changed on a face to face basis).

19. What factors influenced your initial fire control decisions (e.g., attack line size and flow rate, quick hit first versus directly making entry for fire control)?

Additional Learning

The additional learning in this 10-Minute Training considers this incident from two different perspectives. First, place yourself in the role of an officer in this fire department and second, think about how your observations and reflections on this incident can inform your work as a fire officer in your own agency.

Think about the staffing, training, and operational challenges faced by volunteer fire departments and operations at this incident. What are potential areas of leverage for improving fireground performance and tactical capability? If you were a company officer in this department what is the first area that you would work on with members of your company?

You may work for a very different agency with a different staffing and deployment model and different tactical and task capabilities on the fireground. Every agency has a spread between its highest performing members and those that perform at a lower level. Company officers may not have a direct capability to address agency wide fireground performance. But what can you do at the company level to ensure that the members you work with are performing well. Be specific, think about one area that you will work on in the next week.

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