In-Station Training

TM 26-29 Residential Fire

Author

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Purpose

Upper floor fires with extension to the trussloft require an effective size-up and risk assessment to support strategic and tactical decision making.

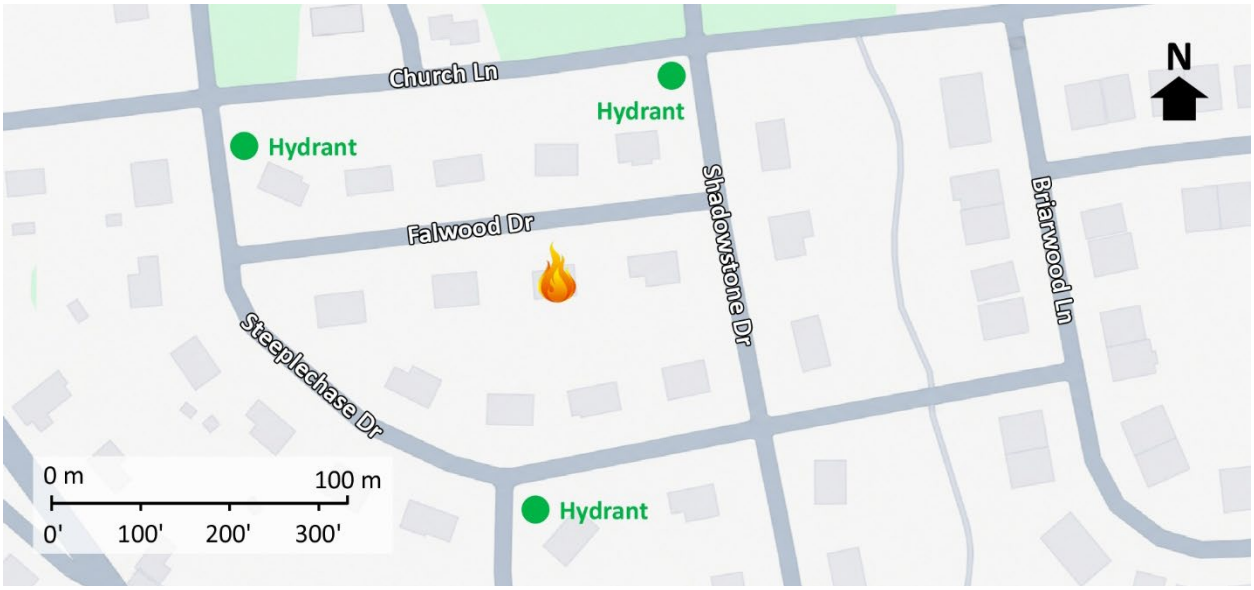
Learning Outcomes

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 1475 Falwood Drive in Forks Township, Pennsylvania on July 1, 2026, at 00:30 (Northeast Bravest, 2026 & Sroka-Holzmann, 2026). 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, 1475 Falwood Drive, Forks Township, PA]. Map data ©2026 Google. https://bit.ly/4yhQUTF.

The closest hydrant is at Church Lane and Shadowstone Drive and there are other hydrants in the area as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Aerial View

Note: Adapted from Google. (2026b). [Aerial view 1475 Falwood Drive, Forks Township, PA]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. https://bit.ly/4f8CLzv.

Figure 3. Alpha/Delta Corner

Note: Adapted from Google. (2025a). [Street view 1475 Falwood Drive, Forks Township, PA]. ©2026 Google. https://bit.ly/4aJaM87. Image edited for clarity with ChatGPT 5.5, DALL·E] Open Ai, (2026).

Figure 4. Alpha/Bravo Corner

Note: Adapted from Google. (2025b). [Street view 1475 Falwood Drive, Forks Township, PA]. ©2026 Google. https://bit.ly/4vkeOLv. Image edited for clarity with ChatGPT 5.5, DALL·E] Open Ai, (2026).

Figure 5. Side Charlie

Note: Adapted from Google. (2026c). [3d aerial view 1475 Falwood Drive, Forks Township, PA]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. https://bit.ly/3Rxp5WO. & Zillow (2026). 1475 Falwood Dr, Easton, PA 18040. https://bit.ly/4yhakrM. . Image created with ChatGPT 5.5, DALL·E] Open Ai, (2026) to provide a ground level view.

The incident is in a suburban residential neighborhood. The area consists primarily of detached single-family homes in a planned subdivision pattern. Many of the homes in this neighborhood were built in the early 2000s. Residential properties in this area are predominantly owner-occupied. English is the predominant language in the township (Open AI, 2026). Fire and emergency medical call volume in this area is typical of a small urban community.

The temperature is currently 74 F (23° C) with wind from the southwest at 8 mph (13 kph) (Weather Underground, 2026). It is Wednesday, July 1st and you are dispatched for a residential fire at 1475 Falwood Drive at 00:30 along with two other engines, a ladder company, medic unit, and command officer. Your engine has 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 ten 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?

Dispatch advises that law enforcement discovered the fire while on patrol and that they advise that the building is "fully involved" and that the occupants have evacuated.

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 west on Falwood Drive. 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 Figure 6 and watch the first 00:15 of the incident video (Northeast Bravest, 2026) illustrating conditions as you arrive.

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

Figure 6. Conditions on Arrival

Note: Adapted from Northeast Bravest. (2026). Forks Township, Pa 2nd alarm working house fire 07-01-2026. https://bit.ly/44Wqppc.

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?

Watch the incident video (Northeast Bravest, 2026) from 01:15 to 01:40 to observe conditions on Sides Bravo and Charlie. Click the link or scan the QR code to access the video.

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 on Steeplechase at Falwood. 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 Church and Shadowstone. 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 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?

Watch the incident video (Northeast Bravest, 2026) from 00:25 to 04:05. Click the link or scan the QR code to access the video. The first arriving engine deployed a 1 ¾" attack line through Side Alpha to Floor 2. Between 01:54 and 01:59 it appears that attack lines were operating on Floor 2 and on the exterior from Side Delta. As the incident continued the company operating on Floor 2 reported heavy fire in the attic and the IC ordered them to "back out" (Broadcastify, 2026). Operations shifted to exterior positions with multiple handlines and a master stream. After the fire was knocked down companies re-entered with a 1 ¾" attack line to check for extension and for overhaul.

18. Was your initial incident action plan in this 10-Minute Training like or different than the initial offensive strategy and deployment of an attack line through Side Alpha to Floor 2 implemented by the first arriving engine at this incident? What critical factors influenced your choice of strategy and initial tactics?

19. After deploying a 1 ¾" attack line to Floor 2, an additional attack line was placed into operations on Side Delta. What are the potential hazards of using both interior and exterior streams in the same area? When might this be appropriate and when might it be inappropriate? What coordination is necessary when using both interior and exterior streams?

20. Why is it important to clearly articulate the strategy and when necessary to use a structured process for shifting strategy from offense to defense during incident operations.

21. What are the potential hazards presented by transitioning from defensive operations back to offense for overhaul? Are there conditions where the risk presented might be acceptable? If so, under what conditions?

Additional Learning

Many contemporary buildings use wood truss roof systems. Wood trusses are cost-effective, lightweight, and faster to install than traditional stick framing. However, contemporary wood trusses often use smaller dimension lumber (e.g., 2" x 4") framing providing a high surface-to-mass ratio resulting in rapid burning and potential for early collapse.

Watch *Roof Collapses on Firefighters* (Firefighter Activity, 2019) with your crew and read *Wood Roof Trusses: Analyzing Collapse* (Ancona, 2023) for a deeper dive into this residential fire with collapse of a wood truss roof system.

Discuss the following with your crew:

- Hazards presented by fire involvement of unprotected engineered wood structural support systems such as wood roof trusses and parallel chord wood trusses or I-joist flooring systems.
- Risk assessment when dealing with fires impacting unprotected engineered wood structural support systems. Particularly, strategic decision making (offense or defense).
- Review the strategic shift process and actions that your crew will need to take when withdrawing or abandoning the building.

References

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