



In-Station Training

TM 26-32a Residential Fire



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Purpose

Companies often arrive before the command officer and the first arriving company officer functions in the role of IC #1 and provides tactical orders to other companies until transfer of command to IC #1. However, sometimes the command officer arrives first, changing the action sequence.

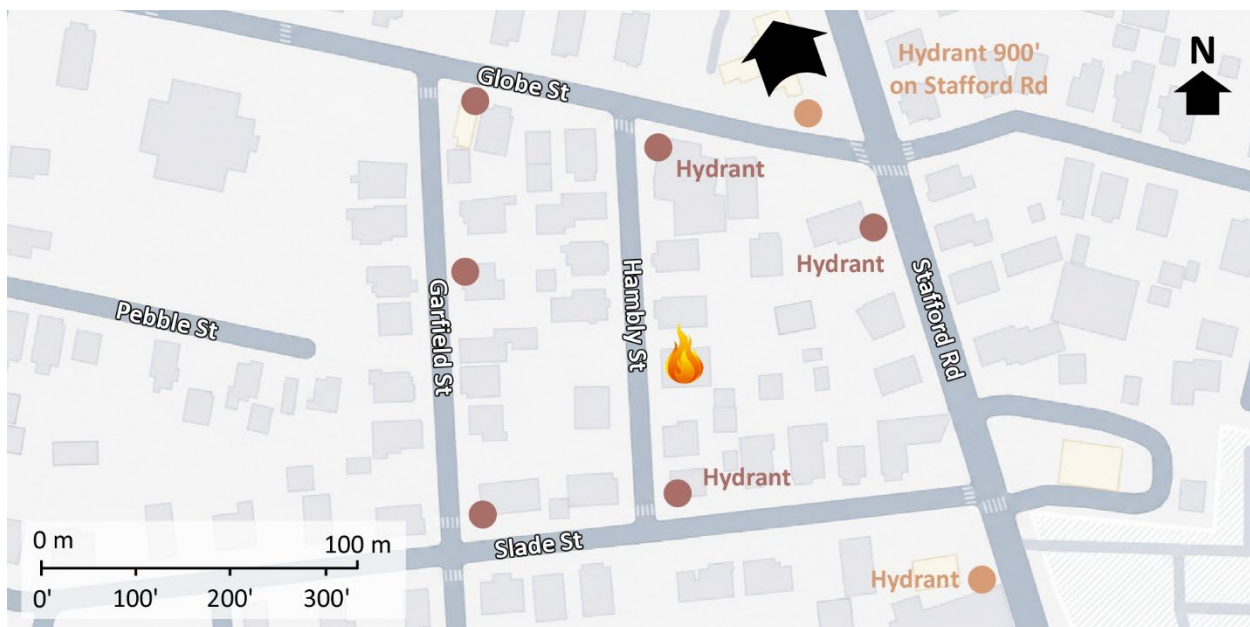
Learning Outcomes

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 46 Hambly Street in Fall River, Massachusetts on Monday, May 5, 2024, at 16:08 (Metro Fire, 2024 & NBC 10 News, 2024). 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, 46 Hambly Street, Fall River, MA]. Map data ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4c0KGOr>.

The closest hydrant is on Hambly Street at Slade Street and there are other hydrants in the area as illustrated in Figure 1. Note that the City of Fall River does not use standard¹ fire color coding on the bonnet and caps of fire hydrants. Hydrant bonnets and outlet caps are color coded based on water main size, with red being used for small mains, orange for medium sized mains, and green for large mains. This color coding is reflected in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026b). [Aerial view 46 Hambly Street, Fall River, MA]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. <https://bit.ly/3Ro8chu>.

¹ National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). (2025) *NFPA 291 Recommended Practice for Fire Flow Testing and Marking of Hydrants*

Figure 3. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023a). [Street view 46 Hambly Street, Fall River, MA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4w9IHZL>.

Figure 4. Side Alpha



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023b). [Street view 46 Hambly Street, Fall River, MA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4wzYDLn>.

Figure 5. Alpha/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023c). [Street view 46 Hambly Street, Fall River, MA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/3RLOhsh>.

Figure 6. Bravo/Charlie Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026c). [3d aerial view 46 Hambly Street, Fall River, MA]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/45FYOnG>.

The incident is in an older urban residential neighborhood. The area consists primarily of closely spaced one- and two-family houses, and small multi-unit residential buildings on a traditional street grid. Many homes in this part of the city were built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This neighborhood has a mix of owner occupied and rental residential occupancies. English is the predominant language, but a substantial percentage of the community speaks languages other than English at home.

The temperature is currently 64° F (18° C) with wind from the south northeast at 8 mph (13 kph) (Weather Underground, 2024). It is Monday, May 5th, at 16:08 and you are dispatched for a residential fire at 46 Hambly Street, along with three engines, a ladder company, and a medic unit. Engines and ladders have four-person staffing². **You are the command officer.**



Time starts now! Answer the first ten 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?

You are out of quarters and are not far from the incident location and will arrive several minutes prior to arrival of the first company, which you anticipate will be Engine 1.

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 ten in the form of communication you would have with dispatch and the responding companies. State the communications exactly as you would them say over the radio or face-to-face. Save explanation or discussion until after you have completed these questions.

You will arrive from the north on Hambly Street. You anticipate Engine 1 will arrive several minutes after you arrive, followed by the ladder company, the other engines, and the medic unit. Examine Figure 7 illustrating conditions as you arrive and watch the [incident video](#) (Metro Fire, 2025) from 00:20 to 00:40. Click the link or scan the QR code to access the video.

² If your first alarm deployment is different, use your own resource assignment and staffing.

Figure 7. Conditions on Arrival



Note: Adapted from Metro Fire. (2025). 5/5/2025 Working fire Fall River Ma, arrival video.
<https://bit.ly/4fy9i3n>.

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

4. What specific actions would you take immediately upon arrival?

You do not observe any smoke from the eaves of the house or from Side Charlie. There are several bystanders, but no building occupant identifies themselves to you and you have no reports regarding occupants.

5. State your follow up report exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch.
6. Engine 1 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on a hydrant at Globe and Hambly. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
7. Ladder 1 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 at Globe and Hambly. 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 at Globe and Hambly. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
9. Medic 3 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on Slade at Hambly. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
10. Engine 3 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on a hydrant on Stafford at Slade. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.



Reflect on your strategic decision-making and responses to questions one through ten before answering the next eight questions. Think about what cues, patterns, or anomalies (differences from conditions that you would anticipate) informed your answers.

11. What information most influenced your expectations?
12. Did anything in the incident post-arrival challenge your initial expectations?

13. What was the actual problem once you arrived?
14. What were your tactical priorities and what was getting in the way of achieving them?
15. During initial operations, was there an immediate threat of serious injury or death to the companies operating at this incident?
16. Was it reasonable to believe that the building was occupied?
17. Was there searchable space?
18. If you believed there was searchable space and that it was reasonable that the building was occupied, what could you do about it?

The first arriving engine stretched an attack line to Floor 2 and likely established their own water supply from the hydrant at Hambly and Slade. Watch the [incident video](#) (Metro Fire) from 00:40 through the end showing arrival and initial incident operations. Click the link or scan the QR code to access the video.



19. What were your assumptions about the building, occupancy, layout. and configuration? How did these assumptions influence the tactical orders that you provided?
20. Did you upgrade the resource determination? If so, what additional resources did you request and where did you place Level 2 Staging? What factors influenced your resource determination and staging location?

21. The fire extended from the interior of the enclosed porch to the void space between the porch ceiling and the roof. What are the likely avenues of extension beyond this void space? What factors might make it more difficult for companies to gain access to this void space when working on Floor 2?
22. Did you develop any contingency plans for reinforcing water supply if fire conditions worsened? If so, how would you have addressed this potential issue?

Additional Learning

There are learning opportunities focused on building construction and water supply that connect well with the incident in this 10-Minute Training.

Building Construction and Arrangement

This house was built in the early 1900s (City of Fall River Assessor's Office, 2026). When dealing with pre-1940s wood frame buildings it is reasonable to have a high index of suspicion regarding the presence of balloon frame construction. Combining the era of construction and alignment of the windows, this type of construction becomes more likely and with it concerns of extension through structural voids. Regarding arrangement, three story, three family homes constructed in this time commonly had two stairwells, one in the front and the other in the rear. Examine Figures 3 and 5 and see if you can identify likely stairwell locations.

Discuss the impacts of building construction and arrangement with your companies. Focus on the types of buildings and occupancies you have in your response area and particularly on those that present significant tactical challenges.

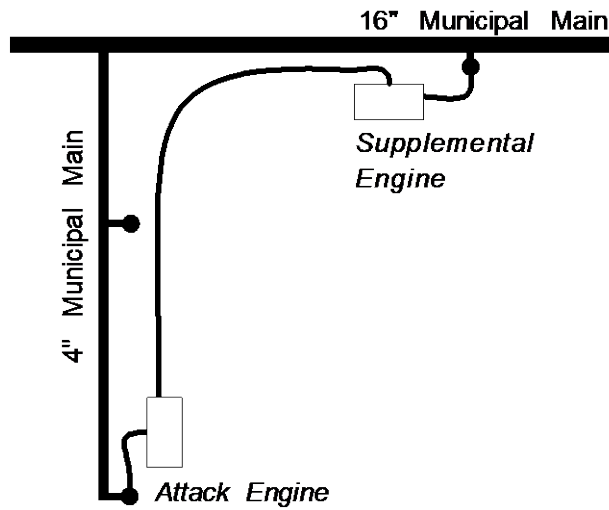
Water Supply

Water supply in this neighborhood was provided by small water mains that likely had significantly limited flow. While it did not appear that water supply became an issue in this incident, had the fire progressed to a greater level of involvement additional flow may have been needed.

When contingency planning for increased water supply it is important to understand the impact of static and residual pressure at the hydrant(s), water main size, water main configuration (e.g., gridding), flow available at hydrants, friction loss in supply lines, pumping capabilities, and water supply tactics. The challenges faced by apparatus operators and command officers are different, but both need to have a solid understanding of fireground water supply.

If using in-line pumping with a hoseline between a hydrant and an engine operating some distance away, and the engine has inadequate water supply, an engine placed at the hydrant to relay may solve the problem. But this is dependent on the flow capability of the hydrant.

When apparatus is operating off a dead end or small diameter, poorly looped main, supplemental pumping may be used to reinforce the water supply provided by the municipal system. This type of operation required identification of a supplementary source that is on a larger main or provides an independent source of water (such as water from a separate water system).



When this type of supplemental pumping is implemented, the supply is drawn from both sources (the hydrant and the supplemental hoseline) and the pressure is equalized. However, it is important to remember that static sources or other non-potable water must not be used as supplementary sources when operating from a municipal or private water system which provides water for domestic service!

Consider the potential water supply challenges that you may encounter in your response area. If you have areas served by small and/or dead end mains, discuss supplemental pumping with the companies you supervise.

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