



Table Top Training Drills

Table Top Training Exercise-January 2012

360-Degree Situational Size-Up

The IAFC's Safety Health and Survival Section developed a set of Rules of Engagement (ROE) for Firefighter Survival. ROE features rules for firefighters and incident commanders to guide them in avoiding difficulties and pitfalls during a fire operation. You can download a free ROE poster at www.iafcsafety.org/downloads/ROE_Poster_FINAL.pdf.

The first ROE for incident commanders states to "Rapidly conduct, or obtain, a 360-degree situational size-up of the incident." The month's Table Top Training Drill features a report supporting this rule and demonstrates the importance of a 360-degree size-up. 144 reports were found when using the keyword search of "360" on www.firefighternearmiss.com. Report [#10-634](#) was found in this search and it is an excellent example of how situations aren't always what they seem. The lack of a 360-degree size-up created a collapse hazard that was narrowly avoided.

Event

Another fire fighter and I made entry into the first floor of a residence. The residence was a one-story in front, with a two-story walkout in the rear (unknown at time, no 360). We knocked down the fire on the first floor and tried to find basement steps (reported as a basement fire). Heat on the first floor was high and we noticed the floor was getting soft so we backed out. After the fire, we went into the basement and realized that all the floor joists below us were burned, and we were basically held up by carpet. If we had stayed where we were, I believe we would have fallen into the basement, which was modified in a way that we probably wouldn't have found the exit. RIT was not established until several minutes into the event.

Lesson Learned

Many things have changed at my department since the event. We do not operate interior until a 360 is complete.

Fire Rescue magazine features an excellent resource for discussion on 360-degree size-ups and developing an Incident Action Plan written by Chief Greg Jakubowski. Take the opportunity to review this [article](#) and your departments SOPs/SOGs regarding this often overlooked critical fireground operation.