



Table Top Training Drills

Table Top Training Exercise- October 2010 Floor Above Operations

Operating on the floor above the fire is one of the most dangerous areas on the fireground. Many serious injuries have occurred as well as line of duty deaths because conditions can deteriorate extremely fast. Collapse, flashover and falling through holes in the floor are all distinct possibilities that crews encounter.

Consider the passage below from near- miss report [10-986](#). Place yourself and your crew into this scenario and discuss the checklist listed that is used as a Fire Department of New York Safety Bulletin.

We were dispatched to a two-story, residential, single-family home with a large fire in the first floor living room. A line was stretched to the rear of the house and advanced to the front of the house to push the fire out the front. At the same time, a team was sent in to search for a confirmed victim. The search team made its way to the second floor room above the fire. A second line was advanced into the front door and up the stairs to the second floor. The second floor search team called a mayday and bailed out of the second floor front window because of the extreme heat. A ladder was positioned to that window and the two person search team escaped out of the window and was sent to the hospital. The victim was later found deceased.

While it is not possible to describe completely all the variable factors which may arise in floor above operations, at least the following considerations must be addressed at every fire:

1. Risk Management

The risk to be assumed by members must be in proportion to the expected gain. Thus search tactics at an occupied structure should be substantially different from those in a vacant building.

2. Communications

Communication must be maintained between members on the fire floor and those above. Timely warning of deteriorating conditions must be communicated to members operating above the fire.

3. Water

Officers intending to operate above the fire must determine if a hoseline is in position to operate on the fire floor. In a vacant building, going to the "floor above" before a hoseline is in position to operate on the fire floor is rarely justifiable.

4. Ventilation

Roof ventilation, especially in smaller buildings, is an essential component of "floor above" operations.

5. Door Control

On the floor, control of the door to the fire apartment is critical to members operating on the floor above.

6. An Area of Refuge

On the "floor above", especially in smaller buildings, an apartment or area of refuge, should be "secured", if possible, prior to operating in the apartment directly above the fire.

7. Laddering

Aerial and/or portable ladders must be raised, if possible, in anticipation of a later developing need to rescue our members and/or civilians.

While the primary responsibility for addressing these seven considerations rests with company officers, chief officers and firefighters; everyone must be vigilant about changing conditions and the potential for danger in operations on the "floor above."