



In-Station Training

TM 26-22 Structural Collapse



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Purpose

Collapse of a building under construction with multiple trapped workers presents a significant challenge to IC #1. As with other types of technical rescue incidents (e.g., high angle, swiftwater, structural collapse) there may be a sense of urgency to act, but specialized resources may be and often are needed.

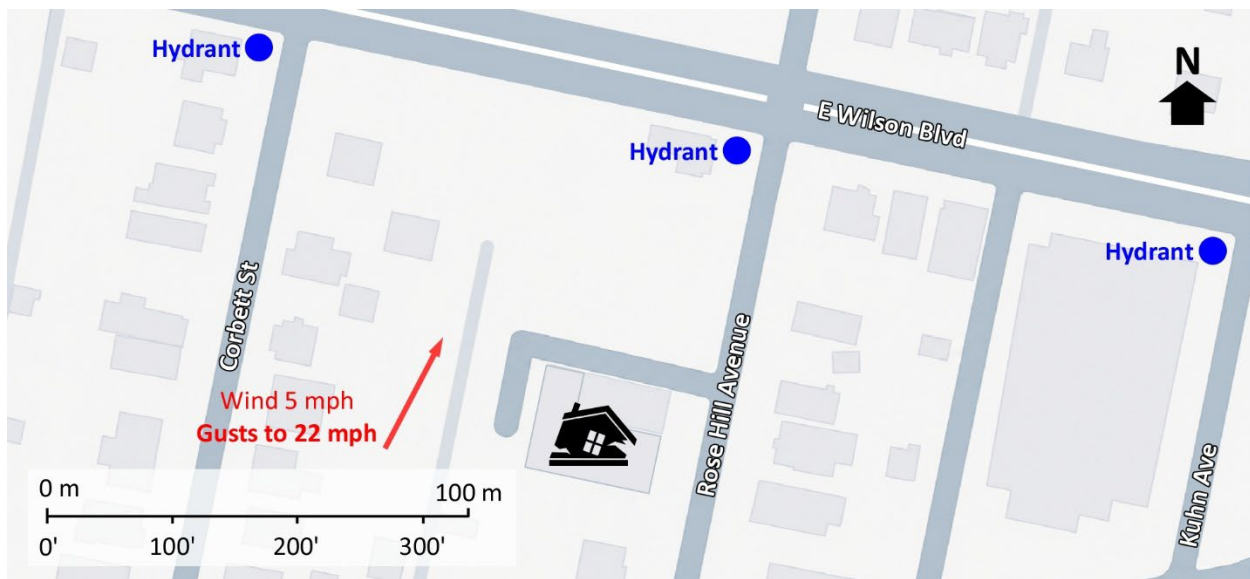
Learning Outcomes

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 structural collapse at a large addition being constructed adjacent to the First Church of God located at 1015 Rose Hill Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland on May 12, 2026, at 14:35 PM (HFD, 2026; DiMargo, 2026; & Chief J. DiBacco, personal communication May 21, 2026). Review the map and photos (Figures 1-4) to gain an understanding of the building and area involved.

Figure 1. Map of the Incident Area



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026a). [Map, 1015 Rose Hill Avenue, Hagerstown, MD]. Map data ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/3Rq9Y16>.

The closest hydrant is on the corner of Rose Hill Avenue and East Wilson Boulevard and there are other hydrants in the area as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026b). [Aerial view 1015 Rose Hill Avenue, Hagerstown, MD]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. <https://bit.ly/4fDThJq>.

Figure 3. Alpha/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2024a). [Street view 1015 Rose Hill Avenue, Hagerstown, MD]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4tOCRkX>.

Figure 4. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2024b). [Street view 1015 Rose Hill Avenue, Hagerstown, MD]. ©2026 Google. <https://bit.ly/4nMblh3>.

The incident is in the city's south end, and the church property is located among established residential blocks. The surrounding area includes detached homes, duplexes, and small multifamily dwellings, with much of the city's older housing stock constructed in the mid to late 1900s. There is a mix of owner and renter occupied housing, with substantial renter occupancy. English is the predominant language, with some households speaking other languages. (Open AI, 2026). Fire and emergency medical call volume in this area is typical of other areas of the community.

The temperature is currently 64° F (18° C) with wind from the south southwest at 5 mph (8 kph) with gusts to 22 mph (35 kph) (Weather Underground, 2026). It is Tuesday May 12th and you are dispatched to a **structural collapse in a building under construction** at the Church of God, 1015 Rose Hill Avenue along with two other engines, a ladder company, medic unit, command officer, and technical rescue team at 14:35. The engines and ladder have four-person staffing¹. **You are the officer of the first arriving engine company.**



Time starts now! Answer the first ten questions within the next 10 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.

While responding, dispatch provides an update that callers report a **building collapse with multiple people trapped**. You hear the other engines, ladder, medic unit, and command officer go enroute.

1. What critical factors would you consider when dispatched and during response? What conversations would you have with your crew during response?
2. Based on the dispatch information and what you know about this occupancy and response area, what do you anticipate finding on arrival?

The responding command officer upgrades the resource determination to a commercial first alarm, adding two additional engines, an additional ladder company and an additional command officer. In addition, he special calls four additional medic units.



Important! Answer questions three through ten 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 north on Rose Hill Avenue. You anticipate the ladder company will arrive several minutes after you, followed by the second arriving engine, medic unit, and command officer. The balance of the resources will arrive after the command officer.

There is no incident or simulation video for this 10-Minute Training. A photorealistic image and photograph of incident conditions are used to provide context for your decision making.

Figure 5. Conditions on Arrival



Note: Adapted from Google (2026c) [3d aerial view 1015 Rose Hill Avenue, Hagerstown, MD.] <https://bit.ly/3RiW2pl>. [Image Created with ChatGPT 5.5, DALL-E] Open Ai, (2025) and manually edited.

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?

You observe an excited construction worker at the entrance to the church parking lot gesturing towards Side Charlie. He then tells you that the roof trusses collapsed and that several workers are trapped.

Figure 6. Conditions on Side Charlie



Note: Adapted from HFD (2026). *Structural Collapse Incident – 1015 Rose Hill Avenue* [Press Release, Facebook Post]. <https://bit.ly/4dxD4mo>

You observe several workers are in the collapse area trying to free their trapped co-workers.

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 East Wilson at Rose Hill. 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 at East Wilson at Rose Hill. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.

9. Medic 2 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on East Wilson, behind Engine 2. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
10. 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 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 you, your crew, or other companies?
16. Was it reasonable to believe that there were workers trapped under the collapse?
17. Was the collapse area searchable?

18. If you believed it was reasonable that there was trapped workers and that the area was searchable, what could you do about it?

As in this 10-Minute Training, the first arriving companies could not see the extent of the collapse until they accessed Side Charlie.” The two trapped patients were partially self-extricated from the collapsed materials prior to emergency crews reaching them. Their locations within the debris field allowed rescuers to rapidly stabilize injuries, package the patients, and safely remove them from the collapse area” (HFD, 2026 & Chief J. DiBacco, personal communication May 21, 2026).

19. How did you deal with the workers that were attempting to rescue their co-workers? What challenges would you anticipate in this process and how would you address them?
20. Structural collapse rescue often requires technical level resources. In this 10-Minute Training, the command officer requested response of the technical rescue team prior to his arrival. What technical level structural collapse resources are available to your agency?

Additional Learning

Read [Building Collapse Basics](#) (Daley, 2018) and [Staying Safe at Structural Collapse Operations](#) (Lee, n.d.). With your crew, discuss how you would approach the arrival and surface rescue operations phase of structural collapse if confronted with a structural collapse of a wood frame building under construction. After this discussion, identify if you would do anything different than you did when completing this 10-Minute Training?

New Blue Card Tech Rescue CE: If you are a [Blue Card](#) Certified IC, complete the Incident Command for Technical Rescue continuing education (CE) module to improve your understanding of the application of the eight functions of command to technical rescue incidents.

References

- Daley, M. (2018). Building collapse basics. Retrieved May 24, 2026, from <https://bit.ly/3XQukSb>.
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