



In-Station Training

TM 26-34 Residential Fire



Author

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Purpose

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1700 Guide for Structural Firefighting states that “pre-arrival factors form the basis of the initial incident strategy and should be continually re-evaluated during an incident” (NFPA, 2026, 9.4). IC #1’s pre-arrival anticipation, planning, and decision making are important elements in effective command and initial fireground operations.

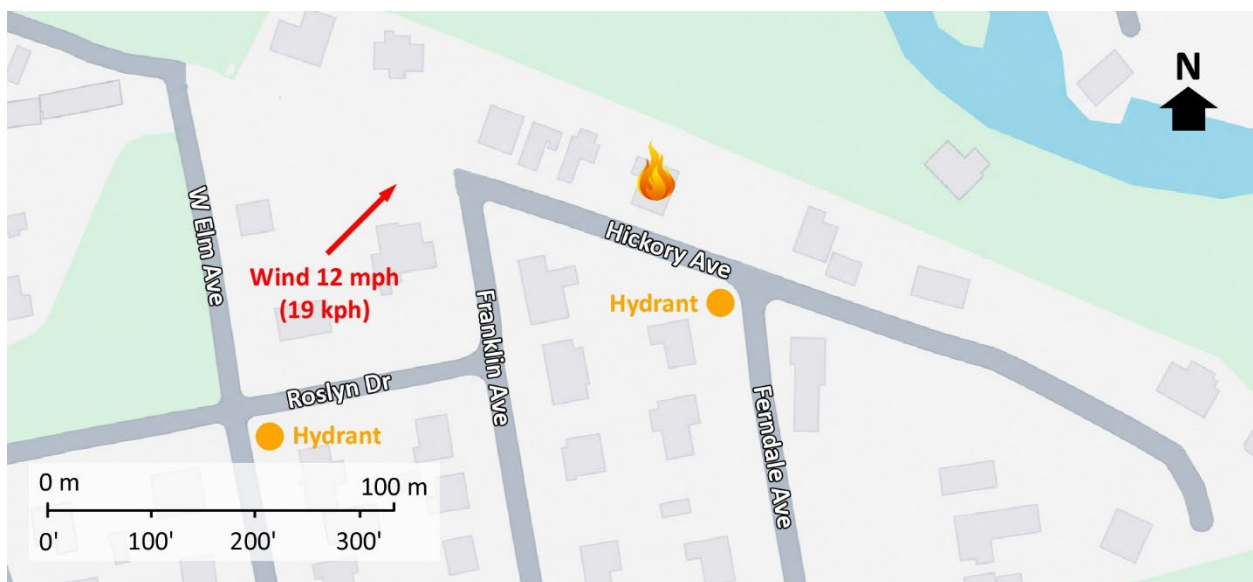
Learning Outcomes

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 77 Hickory Avenue in Mantua, New Jersey on Monday, August 10, 2026, at 12:25 (Cosme, 2026; Broadcastify, 2026; Antonelli, 2026; & Duric, 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, 77 Hickory Ave, Mantua, NJ]. Map data ©2026 Google.
<https://bit.ly/4qfTYfx>.

The closest hydrant is on Hickory Avenue at Ferndale Avenue, and another hydrant is located on West Elm Avenue at Roslyn Drive illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 2. Aerial View



Note: Adapted from Google. (2026b). [Aerial view 77 Hickory Ave, Mantua, NJ]. Imagery © Google, Imagery © Airbus Maxar Technologies, Map Data © 2026. <https://bit.ly/3UiPM2x>.

Figure 3. Alpha/Bravo Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023a). [Street view 77 Hickory Ave, Mantua, NJ]. ©2025 Google. <https://bit.ly/4cHezUe>.

Figure 4. Alpha/Delta Corner



Note: Adapted from Google. (2023b). [Street view 77 Hickory Ave, Mantua, NJ]. ©2025 Google.
<https://bit.ly/4wZnFUx>.

The incident is in a suburban residential area. The neighborhood consists primarily of detached single-family homes constructed in the mid-20th century on moderately sized lots. Homes are predominantly owner-occupied. English is the predominant language, with a relatively small proportion of households speaking languages other than English at home (OpenAI, 2026). Fire and EMS call volume in this area is low and comparable with other suburban areas of the community.

The temperature is currently 88° F (31° C) with wind from the southwest at 12 mph (19 kph) (Weather Underground, 2025). It is Monday, August 10th, at 12:25 and you are dispatched as a single company for an unknown type fire at 77 Hickory Avenue. Your engine has four-person staffing¹. **You are the officer of the engine company.**



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?

¹ If your staffing and deployment are different, use your own resource assignment and staffing.

Dispatch provides an update that they are “getting a bunch of calls on this, unsure what’s burning, report of black smoke from the rear of the address and a second update stating that one caller says that it is some type of large tent on fire close to the house and that there is no one in the tent.

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 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.

3. Based on the updates from dispatch, would you change the resource determination? What critical factors influenced your decision?

The remaining questions are based on upgrade of the resource determination to a residential first alarm, adding two additional engines, a ladder company, medic unit, and command officer. You will arrive from the northwest on Hickory. You anticipate the second engine will arrive shortly after you, followed by the ladder company, and command officer. All other first alarm resources will arrive after the command officer. Watch the [incident video](#) from 00:05 to 0:15 (Cosme, 2026). Click the link or scan the QR code to access the video.

Figure 5. Conditions on Arrival



Note: Adapted from Cosme, L. (2026). *Fire Mantua NJ 2026-0810* [video]. <https://bit.ly/4x44pFF>.

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

5. 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](#) (Cosme, 2026) from 00:15 to 02:35 illustrating conditions on Sides Delta and Bravo



6. Would you change the action you are taking or modify the assignments given to your crew? If so, what task orders would you provide?

7. State your follow up report exactly as you would transmit it to dispatch.

8. Ladder 1 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on Franklin at Hickory. State the tactical assignment you would give them exactly as you would transmit it.
9. Engine 2 arrives and reports that they are Level 1 on the hydrant at West Elm at Roslyn. 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 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?

Rescue 22 (rescue engine), the first arriving engine stretched an attack line through Side Alpha and established their own water supply Squad 6 was assigned to stretch a second attack line off Rescue 22 to the rear (Side Charlie) (Broadcastify, 2026). Watch the [incident video](#) (Cosme, 2026) from 03:35 to the end. Click the link or scan the QR code to access the video.



19. Was the decision to stretch the first line to the interior and the second line to control the exterior fire similar or different from how you approached fire control in this 10-Minute Training? What influenced your decision of where to place the first attack line?
20. What questions would you have asked the man that you observed on Side Delta who had been inside the building searching for the occupant's cat? Based on your observations, do you think that he may have needed medical attention? If so, how did you (or would you) deal with this?
21. Given the extension of fire from the exterior to the interior and attic of the house, how did you coordinate fire control and primary search? What factors influenced your decisions?
22. The fire burned through the roof and was burning under the solar panels. The IC assigned Ladder 23 to go "to the roof" and then advised "interior" that they were going to "open up [the roof]". Based on conditions observed in the incident video, the presence of photovoltaic (PV) panels on the Bravo and Delta sides of the roof, do you think that this tactic was appropriate? Why or why not?

Additional Learning

There are several opportunities for additional learning related to the incident examined in this 10-Minute Training. Listen to the [incident audio](#) (Hartin, 2026) and track company assignments and incident organization. The incident audio has been edited to remove dead airtime between communications. Keep in mind that there likely was quite a bit of face-to-face communication between the IC and resources on the fireground.



Pre-Arrival Anticipation and Planning

NFPA 1700 (2026) identifies the following categories of pre-arrival factors that should be considered: Existing reference materials such as maps and pre-plans, computer aided dispatch (CAD) resources, weather conditions, occupancy, and time of day. What other pre-arrival factors would you consider when responding to a structure fire? Discuss pre-arrival factors with your crew and how this information can have a positive impact on decision making and initial fireground operations.

Communication, Incident Organization, and Tactical Operations

Were you able to track company assignments and the incident organization? Command communicated several times with “interior”. Do you think that this was a single company or a group (with multiple companies)? The IC also communicated with “operations” and advised dispatch who “operations” was. However, companies continued to communicate with the IC. In the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the operations section chief is responsible for all tactical operations. When this function is used at a fire in a small house such as this how does this impact on the IC’s span-of-control and the reporting relationships of tactical supervisors (division and group supervisors) and the companies?

Discuss incident communications with your crew and how the use of task, location, and objective orders could have improved communications in this incident. Discuss how incident organization and tactical supervision could have effectively supported the work.

Photovoltaic Panels

If you did not review PV safety in [10-Minute Training 26-28a](#) (Hartin, 2026b), watch [Photovoltaic Safety for Firefighters](#) (LACoFD, 2020) for an overview of firefighter safety when working around residential and commercial photovoltaic (PV) installations.



Discuss the following with the members of your crew:

- Procedures for disconnecting power from PV systems.
- Hazards presented when working around PV panels.
- Tactical options during offensive and defensive firefighting operations at buildings with PV systems.

References

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