



# Northeast Fire Department Association

Operations

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## ***Tactical Guidelines: High-Rise Firefighting Guidelines***

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

**NEFDA President**

### **I.**

#### **Purpose**

To establish firefighting objectives for high-rise structures.

### **II.**

#### **Definitions**

##### **A. Automatic Alarm:**

An alarm dispatched with minimal fire companies due to only a smoke or water flow detector (no visible smoke or fire)

##### **B. Fire Company (company):**

Engine, Quint or Truck

##### **C. High-rise (HR) Equipment:**

1. A canvas bag with assorted items and strapped hose bundles with which all companies shall enter a high-rise building unless ordered otherwise.
2. A HR pack consists of the following items:
  - a. A canvas bag carrying pack for loose items
  - b. One - 2-½" x 1-½" gated lightweight wye with pressure gauge and dual shutoffs
  - c. One - 2-½" x 1-½" reducer fitting
  - d. One - 1 ½ "75psi/200gpm fog/ 1 1/8 straight bore break-apart nozzle
  - e. A minimum of 100 feet of 2" hose
  - f. 25-50 feet of 2 ½ " or 3" hose
  - g. Hose straps for carrying two hose bundles
  - h. One - 18 inch lightweight pipe wrench
  - i. Two - spanner wrenches
  - j. One roll of duct tape
  - k. Sprinkler wedges, door stops, and stop lock straps
  - l. Wire brush
3. Forcible Entry Tools
4. Pike Pole
5. 4 spare SCBA bottles.

- D. **High-rise Structure:**
  - 1. Any building with three or more stories above the lowest Fire Department access.
  - 2. Any building in which complete evacuation is not practical due to the height and/or configuration.
- E. **Lobby Control:**

Functional position located in the lobby of the building responsible for numerous support activities.
- F. **Rapid Intervention Team (RIT):**

Company committed to rapid rescue of trapped or lost firefighters
- G. **Refuge and Treatment:**

Area two or three floors below the fire where escaping and injured occupants are held for treatment and safety.
- H. **Reported High-Rise Fire:**

Full high-rise alarm dispatched due to a building occupant or other person reporting a fire within the building to Fire Alarm.
- I. **Resource Division:**

Area two floors below the fire where equipment and personnel are held for use on the fire floors.
- J. **Stairwell Support:**

Function of transporting equipment and supplies via the firefighters stairwell
- K. **Suppression Team:**

A minimum of four firefighters whose primary function is to locate & attack the fire.
- L. **Top Control:**

Assignment above fire floor to look for extension of fire and search for victims and possibly establish ventilation.
- M. **Water Supply:**

Function assigned to establish permanent water supply to standpipe and sprinkler system and ensure secure water path to fire floor.

### III. General Information

- A. Background:
  - 1. The objective of this document is to set forth a standard guideline as authorized by the NEFDA Fire Chiefs.
  - 2. This document is not meant to relieve officers and firefighters of their responsibility for making tactical decisions and using good judgment. This guideline is designed to structure a sensible attack, rescue, and command framework that can be used in most situations. No predetermined plan can cover all situations that might be confronted in a high-rise fire.
- B. Response to High-Rise Incidents:
  - 1. Response to an Automatic Alarm in a high-rise building will be determined by each NEFDA department.

2. Recommended initial response to a reported fire (Reported High-Rise Fire):
  - a. 6 Fire companies
  - b. 2 Battalion chiefs
  - c. 2 Medics
  
3. Multiple Alarms
  - a. A second alarm will always be requested when an arriving company finds smoke showing or is discovered inside the building. This second alarm is in addition to the recommended initial response to a reported fire.
  - b. Multiple alarm response shall consist of:
    - (1) Second alarm
      - (a). 4 fire companies
      - (b). 1 Battalion Chief
      - (c). 1 Medic
      - (d). Air Supply unit
      - (e). Red Cross / rehab unit
    - (2) Third and greater alarms
      - (a). 3 fire companies
      - (b). 1 Chief officer
      - (c). 1 Medic

C. Objectives for the High-Rise Incident

Seven objectives, in the recommended order that must be established to manage the incident:

1. Suppression
2. Water Supply
3. Lobby Control
4. Top Control
5. Resource
6. Rapid Intervention
7. Command (first Battalion Chief)

#### **IV. Guideline**

A. Automatic Alarm:

1. The first arriving company will attempt to meet with a building representative to determine if an actual emergency exists.
2. Investigate.
3. Upgrade (or downgrade) the response as necessary.

B. Reported High-Rise Fire:

1. First-arriving company will
  - a. Obtain any pertinent information.

- b. Secure building/master and elevator keys.
  - c. Pass initial information about conditions to Alarm or Command.
  - d. Recall appropriate elevators for Fire Department use.
  - e. Establish the Initial **Suppression Team with the radio designation “Suppression.”**
2. Members of the first arriving fire companies will form the initial Suppression Team; Water Supply must also be established at the same time. **In no case will the Suppression Team consist of less than four members.**
- a. The Suppression Team will operate under the direction of the highest-ranking officer. The officer and team will
    - (1). Command the incident if a Battalion Chief is not already on-scene and will operate in the fast attack-mobile command mode until relieved of command. The Suppression Team officer will decide which floor the Suppression Team will ascend or descend to and how the movement will be made. Stairs will be utilized in any building less than 9 floors.
    - (2). Obtain building keys from lock box. Extra keys will be left in a secure place for the Lobby Control officer.
    - (3). Proceed to the upper floors carrying, at a minimum, the equipment listed in II.C.
    - (4). Check the layout of the floor below the fire floor before moving onto the fire floor in order to become familiar with the layout of the floor.
    - (5). Investigate conditions on the fire floor, take appropriate actions, and report back to Command or Alarm the conditions, actions, results of actions, and additional needs or resources on the fire floor.
  - b. If the Suppression Team should encounter a working fire or dangerous incident, the officer will report conditions to Command or Alarm.
  - c. The Suppression Team officer will make frequent reports regarding progress; best stairwell for fire attack, evacuation route and ventilation to Command.
  - d. The Suppression Team will become part of the floor division if conditions dictate. (Example: Division 7 if fire is found on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor). An officer assigned as the division officer will be responsible for all activities in that division
3. An initial alarm company shall establish water supply and with the **radio designation “Water Supply”** and will:
- a. Locate and charge the sprinkler and standpipe connections.
  - b. Spot the supply apparatus in a safe location to minimize falling debris hazard (Driver Operator stays with supply apparatus).

- c. Request that the standpipe be checked from the lobby to the floor below the fire floor.
  - d. Maintain a sufficient pressure to support the fire flow water requirements.
4. An initial alarm company shall establish **Lobby Control** with the **radio designation "Lobby"** and will:
- a. Locate Lobby Control in the lobby area if possible or a pre-selected place that will best serve operational needs.
  - b. Initiate the following support activities:
    - (1). Establishing the initial accountability system in the lobby.
    - (2). Capturing and controlling the elevators.
    - (3). Controlling the air handling systems.
    - (4). Locating building communications systems.
    - (5). Locating building utility services.
    - (6). Locating the building engineer.
    - (7). Locating stairwell entry and exit points.
    - (8). Obtaining, recording, dispersal and collection of access keys.
    - (9). Determining operational status of fire pumps.
    - (10). Controlling and recording company designations and names of personnel entering and exiting the building.
    - (11). Assigning personnel to the central control panel.
    - (12). Directing and controlling vertical access of incoming fire companies to the Resource Division or assigned area through safe routes.
    - (13). Placing a lifeline and forcible entry tools in each elevator being used.
    - (14). Providing each company entering the building with an operational telephone number in the Lobby Control area, if available, as a backup for communications.
5. An initial alarm company shall establish **Top Control** with the **radio designation "Top Control"** and will
- a. Ascend to the floor(s) above the reported fire floor.
  - b. Assess conditions relating to search, rescue, evacuation, ventilation, fire extension, forcible entry, etc.
  - c. Take appropriate actions in regard to life and property.
  - d. Request additional resources early to allow all floors above the fire floor to be investigated.
  - e. Top Control Companies shall leave their high rise bag in the stairwell on the floor that they enter to provide visual confirmation that the Company is on that floor.

6. An Initial alarm medic unit shall initially establish **Resource with the radio designation "Resource"**. A fire company should be assigned as quickly as possible to Resource and both units will
  - a. Ascend to two floors below the fire floor.
  - b. Manage all resources, personnel and equipment in the resource area.
  - c. Carry up as many air bottles as possible.
  - d. Carry up EMS Supplies.
  - e. Establish an initial area for **Refuge and Treatment**. "Refuge and Treatment" may be moved to three floors below the fire floor as the incident expands.
  - f. Maintain a communication link to Command or Logistics or other assigned section chief.
  - g. Maintain a list of all personnel and equipment.
  - h. Maintain a list of all personnel entering or exiting the area by company.
  - i. Advise Command or Logistics section chief when resources fall below predetermined levels.
  - j. Assign crews to duties as requested by Command, Operations or Logistics, or other commanders.
  
7. An Initial alarm company will establish **Rapid Intervention, radio designation "Rapid Intervention,"** and will
  - a. Assemble the appropriate tools to go aloft. Considerations include:
    - (1). Extra air packs
    - (2). Assortment of forcible entry tools
    - (3). High-rise pack (mandatory)
    - (4). Lifeline (mandatory)
    - (5). Thermal imager
  - b. Maintain a strong awareness of the fire floor conditions.
  - c. Physically locate the Rapid Intervention Team on the Resource floor.
  
8. The first arriving Battalion Chief shall establish formal Command outside of the 200-foot safety perimeter. **Radio Designation is "(Incident Name) Command."** The Incident Commander is responsible for the establishment and completion of the incident strategic goals. The Strategic Goals, in order of priority are:
  - a. Remove or protect endangered occupants and treat the injured
  - b. Provide for the safety, accountability, and welfare of personnel.
  - c. Stabilize the incident and provide for life safety.
  - d. Conserve property.

## V. Command

Effectively combating a working fire in a high-rise structure requires the assembly and coordination of sufficient fire-fighting forces to safely protect the occupants and property, and to extinguish the fire.

Incident Command must establish and complete certain tactical objectives and:

1. Obtain command from the officer in the fast attack mode.
2. Establish a 200-foot safety perimeter around the entire structure.
3. Select a command post outside the safety perimeter.
4. Confirm that all first-alarm companies are working to complete the following assignments:
  - (a). Suppression
  - (b). Lobby
  - (c). Water Supply
  - (d). Top Control
  - (e). Resource Division
  - (f). Rapid Intervention
5. Adjust assignments based on immediate critical needs.
6. Be proactive in calling for additional alarms or resources.
7. Manage the incident by Implementing Branches, Divisions and Sections. Use incoming Chief Officers to command those areas.
8. Assign the second arriving Battalion Chief:
  - (a). In most situations, assigning the second Battalion Chief as the Logistics Officer would be appropriate. Dividing the incident's tactical and support functions early will enhance the Incident Commander's ability to manage radio traffic and, thus, the overall incident. If a Logistics officer is implemented, the Section would be responsible for Lobby and Resources. Logistics should be moved to a different radio channel.

The Logistics officer is responsible for:

- (i). Insuring adequate levels of facilities, services, and materials for the incident.
  - (ii). Consulting with Command to determine overall strategy regarding the required level of FD and outside resources.
  - (iii). Managing Lobby, Resource, Stairwell Support, and Refuge/Treatment.
- (b). Delegating Logistics (Lobby and Resources) leaves Command with Suppression, Water Supply and Top Control (ventilation).
9. Determine strategy for rescue, evacuation, fire suppression, ventilation, treatment, and overhaul based on information received from units working inside.

## VI. Accountability

1. All Companies entering the high-rise will leave Responder Boards with **Lobby Control**. Their Passports shall stay with them until assigned to a Division.
2. **Lobby** will maintain Passports for **Lobby** and **Stairwell Support** Companies.
3. Initial **Suppression, Top Control, Resource and Refuge/Treatment** Companies will maintain control of their Passports and be prepared to establish Divisions.
4. **Rapid Intervention** Companies will leave Passports with the Division or Group that they are assigned.
5. **Water Supply** Responder Boards or PAT(s) shall be maintained on the vehicle(s) providing water supply. These Responder Boards or PAT(s) should be collected at the Command Post as soon as possible for those personnel or companies that will REMAIN in Water Supply.
6. Company Passports shall follow the Company as they change to different Divisions and be presented to the Division Officer.

**DIVISION COMMANDS  
PRE-ASSIGNED FUNCTIONS**

<b>TOP CONTROL DIVISION</b>
<b>FIRE FLOOR DIVISION</b> (Suppression Team)
<b>RESOURCE DIVISION</b> (Rapid Intervention Team)
<b>REFUGE and TREATMENT</b>
<b>LOBBY CONTROL</b>

Initial Alarm Company – Establish as necessary with initial Suppression

Suppression:  
Initial Alarm Companies (at least four members)

Initial Alarm Medic Unit  
Initial Alarm Company  
Initial Alarm Company (RIT)

Initial Alarm Medic  
Initial Alarm Company  
Later arriving Medics as needed

Initial Alarm assignment personnel

**WATER SUPPLY**  
Initial Alarm personnel coordinate with Suppression

**COMMAND**  
(Outside falling debris zone)  
1st Battalion Chief

**LOGISTICS or OPERATIONS**  
2nd Battalion Chief

**STAGING**  
(Outside 200' perimeter; 2-3 blks)  
2<sup>nd</sup> alarm personnel

## Strategic Objectives

## Assigned Units

1. Command	_____	_____	_____
2. Suppression	_____	_____	_____
3. Water Supply	_____	_____	_____
4. Lobby Control	_____	_____	_____
5. Top Control	_____	_____	_____
6. Resource/Refuge	_____	_____	_____
7. Rapid Intervention	_____	_____	_____

### Suggested Order of Assignments

1<sup>st</sup> Company: Officer & Firefighter-Suppression Team, Drv/Engineer- Lobby Control

2<sup>nd</sup> Company: Officer & Firefighter-Suppression Team, Drv/Engineer- Water supply

3<sup>rd</sup> Company:Lobby Control

4<sup>th</sup> Company:Top Control

5<sup>th</sup> Company:Resource

6<sup>th</sup> Company:RIT

1<sup>st</sup> MICU: Assist with water supply, Report to Resource

2<sup>nd</sup> MICU: Establish Resource/Refuge

Divisions	Units Assigned
Top Control	_____
Fire Floor	_____
Resource	_____
Refuge & Treatment	_____
Lobby Control	_____
Water Supply	_____