

COURSE DESCRIPTION



This program is designed to provide background and information to fire departments that may experience the construction of large area buildings in their community. Many fire departments have limited experience in the planning and response to these complex buildings. This requires a thorough understanding of the fire and building code provisions as well as the proper use of NFPA 241, Standard for Safeguarding Construction, Alteration, and Demolition Operations and NFPA 1620, Standard for Pre-Incident Planning.

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

2

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion, participants will be better able to:

1 Risks & Hazards

Identify risks & hazards on constructions sites. Learn the leading causes of fires in structures under construction.

2 Codes & Standards

Apply model codes and standards that pertain to safety precautions during construction and pre-incident planning.

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

3 Pre-Incident Planning

Identify the procedures and methods of pre-incident planning from the moment a building is contemplated.

Tactics and Strategy

Using case studies develop strategies and tactics to suppress a fire on a construction site of a large area building.

3

3



www.constructionfiresafety.org

Free to Qualified Officials
Fire Safety Manuals
Links & Resources
Webinars
Checklists & Guidance
documents
Quarterly newsletters



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under

NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

U.S. fire departments report the following structure fire averages

- 3,840 under construction
- 2,580 during major renovations

Campbell, Richard, NFPA, *Fires in Structures Under Construction or Renovation,* February 2020

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction



5

IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

- While fires on construction sites made up only 0.8% of all fires in structures from 2010-2014*, they get a disproportional amount of media coverage
- · The media reaction is often negative
- Economic development takes a huge hit when a construction fire occurs
- Conforming to best practices to reduce the frequency and severity of these fires can reduce a considerable amount of criticism



*Campbell, Richard, NFPA, Fires in Structures Under Construction, Undergoing Major Renovation, or Being Demolished, April 2017

Significant Fires During Construction



BOUND BROOK, NJ- JANUARY 12, 2020

- "Meridia Downtown"
- 174-unit apartment
- 7 alarms
- 70 departments/ 3 Counties
- Destroyed 4 surrounding buildings
- Power cut to downtown for a day
- · Commuter rail line shut down
- 100 homes evacuated
- · Arson- arrest made





Courtesy of NJ.com



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

8

DENVER, COLORADO - MARCH 7, 2018

- · Two dead,
- · Middle of afternoon
 - Three alarms
 - Six roof exposure fires
- · Five-story wood-frame
 - 80-unit multi-family
- · Radiant heat melted 40 vehicles
- · Undetermined cause



Courtesy the Denver Post



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

Courtesy the CBS Denver

C

COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND - APRIL 24, 2017

- · Seven-story mixed use
 - Retail/residential
- Sprinkler system installed, but not yet operational
- · UMD closed, senior housing evacuated
- \$39 million
- Cause: accidental
- · Razing top five floors



Courtesy the Washington Post

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

10

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA - JULY 7, 2017

- The Waverly
 - Seven story, mixed use
 - 328,000 ft²
 - 196 units
- · Construction crane collapse risk
 - Spinning in thermal column
- 100 neighbors evacuated
- · ATF: Undetermined cause
- · Similar to other East Bay arson fires

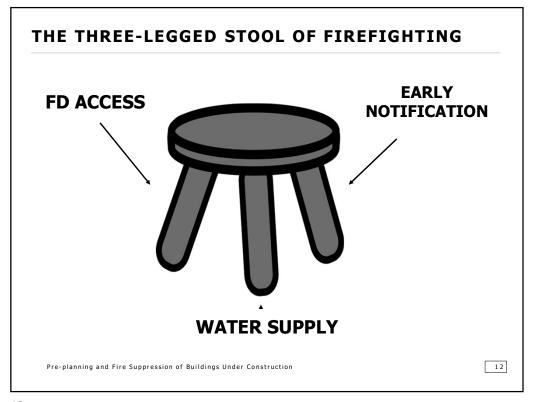


Photo credit: SF Gate. com

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

11

11





Understanding Risks & Hazards

It's no surprise that construction sites can become an unsafe environment

13

SOURCES OF IGNITION



- · Smoking Materials
- Cooking
- Open Flames
- Electrical equipment
- Light fixtures
- Heat and Sparks from grinding and cutting metal
- Arson

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

14

SOURCES OF FUEL



- Combustible refuse and trash
- Building materials
- Flammable gases e.g. propane
- Flammable liquids
- Packaging materials

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

15

15

CAUSES OF NEW CONSTRUCTION FIRES



- Cooking Equipment 22%
- Electrical- 16%
- Heating Equipment- 15%
- Intentionally Set- 11%
- Torch, burner or soldering iron- 7%
- Exposure Fires 4%
- · Smoking- 4%
- Spontaneous Combustion- 4%

Campbell, Richard, NFPA, Fires in Structures Under Construction or Renovation, February 2020

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

16

CAUSES OF NEW CONSTRUCTION FIRES

- Cooking equipment is the leading cause of fires, but they are usually minor.
- Electrical fires account for 16% of all construction fires but 42% of property damage
- Intentionally set fires make up 11% of construction fires but responsible for 32% of property damage

Campbell, Richard, NFPA, Fires in Structures Under Construction or Renovation, February 2020



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

17

17

TIMING OF NEW CONSTRUCTION FIRES

- Occur more frequently in colder months.
- Peak times are between 1600 hrs. and 2000 hrs.
- 12% occur between midnight and 0400 hrs.

Campbell, Richard, NFPA, Fires in Structures Under Construction or Renovation, February 2020



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

18

LEADING FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO IGNITION



- Electrical failures or malfunctions
- Abandoned, discarded materials or products
- Heat source too close to combustibles

Campbell, Richard, NFPA, Fires in Structures Under Construction or Renovation, February 2020

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

19

19

FIRES BY HEAT SOURCE

The leading heat sources for fires in structures under construction involved either heat or sparks, embers or flame from operating equipment, which together accounted for nearly two of five fires, followed by arcing.

Taken together, some kind of operating equipment acted as the heat source in almost one-half of these fires.

Campbell, Richard, NFPA, Fires in Structures Under Construction or Renovation, February 2020

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

2 0

FIRES OCCURRING DURING MAJOR RENOVATION



- Electrical- 23%
- Heating Equipment- 15%
- Intentionally Set Fires 12%
- Cooking Equipment 10%
- Torch, Burner, or Soldering Iron 9%
- Smoking Materials 3%
- Exposure Fires 3%

Campbell, Richard, NFPA, Fires in Structures Under Construction or Renovation, February 2020

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

2 1

21

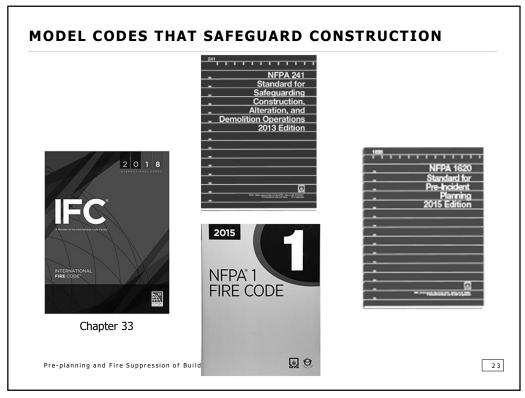


CODES & STANDARDS

 \ldots that pertain to safety precautions during construction & Preincident Planning

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

2 2



23

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU ACTIVITIES

The Fire Department has two roles in dealing with fires in buildings under construction:

- First role is carried out between the builder and the fire prevention bureau during planning
- Second role is carried out between the construction staff and the FD operations division during construction



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

2 4

CONSTRUCTION SITE PRE-PLANNING

The model code provides that private party who is responsible for Fire Protection Plan activity at the construction site shall develop and maintain an approved fire plan that includes an approved pre-incident plan in cooperation with the fire department.

Local policies and procedures must be considered in any pre-incident plan.



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

2 5

25

CONSTRUCTION PRE-INCIDENT PLAN

- Fire department site access points
- Fire extinguisher and initial attack equipment locations
- Any special provisions for firefighting activities



- Disposition of all built-in fire protection measures
- · Emergency escape routes and stairs
- · Hydrant positions
- Assembly point locations
- Details of temporary accommodation and storage areas, including hazardous item storage locations (e.g. flammable liquids, gas cylinders, etc.)

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

2 6

PRE-INCIDENT PLANNING - BUREAU PERSPECTIVE

The Fire Department should meet with the owner/ developer before construction, the issues to discuss include

- FD access to the construction site
- · Sufficiency of the water supply to the site
- Reporting of emergencies
- Built-in fire protection (Standpipes, sprinkler systems etc.)



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

2.7

27

PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETINGS

The reason for a pre-construction meeting from a fire department perspective is to lay the groundwork for a pre-fire plan.

Items to discuss:

- Timing of construction
- Anticipated weather and its challenges
- The shifting content of the building
- Fire safety



During a fire event should not be the first time the fire department talks with the building contractor!

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

28

FIRE INSPECTOR INTERFACE W/ BLDG INSPECTOR

- Building inspectors are in the building almost daily while fire inspectors only inspect periodically.
- Fire inspectors should engage in an ongoing dialogue with building inspectors about potential fire risks.
- Building inspectors know a lot about construction codes but traditionally have not engaged on construction fire safety.

 <u>Don't assume that building inspectors are inspecting for fire</u> safety practices.



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

29

29

BUILT IN FIRE PROTECTION

Many fire protection features will not be fully operational until the building is ready for occupancy.

The FD should be aware of the status of the various building systems that will be relied upon during suppression activities

Knowing whether the systems are in or out of service could be a key factor in the decision to mount an offensive or defensive fire attack.

Early activation of the sprinkler system may help reduce fire loss.



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

3 0

OPERATIONAL PLANNING

First due units should identify the following before construction begins and monitor during construction

- The # of fire hydrants & waters sources and their locations
- · The types of materials present and their storage methods
- · Additional resources to help with fire i.e. moving vehicles, temporary structures
- Identify who will notify the local fire department when construction begins
- The following information should be collected and shared:
 - · Contact person and phone number
 - 1st due company
 - · Verify the address is known to dispatch

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

3 1

31

OPERATIONAL PLANNING - CONTINUED

Before work begins other factors must be addressed

- Do sub-contractors have fire prevention plans as part of their processes?
- Do they have Emergency Response plans as part of their resources?



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

3 2

CONSTRUCTION FIRE SAFETY PLAN

Unlike a Pre-Incident Plan for the FD, this is a Guidance Document for the Builder

- Do they conduct training?
- Do they have a system of accountability for their workers in an emergency?
- Have they established a warning system?
- Is fire equipment available?
- Do they have a "Hot Work" permit system?
- Are flash-back arrestors used?
- Are compressed gasses on site and how are they stored?
- Is welding equipment inspected and in good shape?
- What PPE is in place?

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

3 3

33

DURING CONSTRUCTION - ELEMENTS TO ADDRESS

- Constant maintenance of fire protection equipment
 - Hydrants are visible and unobstructed
 - · Hydrants are operational
 - Extinguishers are adequate and properly located
 - Extinguishers are fully charges and tagged
 - Standpipes "go up" with the building
 - FDC is visible, marked and readily accessible



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

3 4

DURING CONSTRUCTION - ELEMENTS TO ADDRESS

- Maintain clear access to buildings and onto the site:
 - All roads kept clear of debris
 - An all weather driving surface
 - 20 ft. of unobstructed width
 - Turn arounds for dead end roads of 150 ft. or more
 - · Access roads extend to within 150 ft. of the building
 - · At least 13.5 ft. of vertical clearance



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

3 5

35

DURING CONSTRUCTION - ELEMENTS TO ADDRESS

- Keep materials from accumulating around the building
 - Piles of wood or other combustibles should be kept away from the building unless they are part of the active construction process.
 - 30 ft. of clearance from construction materials to the building
 - · Trash and debris removed daily
 - Construction materials not stored in building unless fire protection is in service



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

3 6

DURING CONSTRUCTION - ELEMENTS TO ADDRESS



Maintain a "no smoking" policy in or near buildings

- Set up designated smoking areas for employees off site
- Monitor the no smoking policy by conducting audits
- If a smoking area is set up on site; make sure it is covered against inclement weather so employees don't have an excuse to smoke in the building
- Make sure it's located away from any construction and combustible material and proper receptacles are present for disposal

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

3 7

37

DURING CONSTRUCTION - ELEMENTS TO ADDRESS

- Hot Work/ Burn permits should be used
 - · Pre-inspection of work area
 - Charged fire extinguisher at all times at the point of work
 - · A dedicated fire watch at all times
 - Monitor the area for 30 minutes after work is conducted with a fire extinguisher



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

3 8

POINTS OF INTEREST ON A CONSTRUCTION SITE PLAN

- Availability of fire protection systems
- Mitigation practices
- Water supply
- Means of egress and access
- Location of hazmats



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

3 9

39

PRE-INCIDENT PLAN

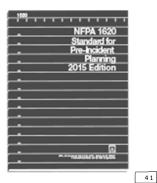
NFPA 1620



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

NFPA 1620: STANDARD FOR PRE-INCIDENT PLANNING

- NFPA 1620, Section 1.1.1 This document is not intended for preincident planning related to construction, alteration, and demolition (See NFPA 241)
- NFPA 1620, Section 4.1.8 The development of a pre-incident plan for new facilities and other situations shall begin during the design phase.



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

41

PRE-FIRE PLANNING FROM AN OPERATIONS PERSPECTIVE

- Pre-incident planning is the process of gathering and documenting information that is critical for making incident command decisions on the scene
- NFPA 1620 provides criteria for developing pre-incident plans for use by emergency personnel responding to emergencies
- Local FD's can create their own version of pre-incident planning forms
- The objective is to map out a common understanding of the facts, probabilities, and possibilities of what could occur on a specific site

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

- AHJ shall determine the locations to be pre-planned and the data to be collected- your FD needs a clearly defined scope and comprehensive policy
- · The following items should be considered
 - · Potential life safety hazards: including first responder safety
 - Structure size & complexity
 - Economic impact
 - · Importance to the community
 - Location and seasonal variations
 - · Presence of hazardous materials and processes
 - Susceptibility to natural disasters



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

43

NFPA 1620 QUICK OVERVIEW

Electronic plans are allowed if <u>all</u> four conditions are met

- 1. The electronic connection is considered reliable by the AHJ
- 2. The electronic connection is secured against unauthorized users
- 3. The electronic version is available at the incident scene
- 4. The electronic version is protected from unauthorized changes



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

4 4

The Pre-Planning must cover the following areas:

- · Physical and Site Considerations
- Life Safety Consideration
- Water Supply & Fire Protection Systems
- · Hazardous Materials



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

4 5

45

NFPA 1620 QUICK OVERVIEW

Physical and Site Considerations

- 1. Construction type
- 2. Building management systems & utilities
- 3. External site conditions
- 4. Internal & external security features
- 5. Fences or other barriers



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

46

Life Safety Considerations Hours of operation

- 2. Occupant load
- 3. Occupant accountability
- 4. Assistance for non-ambulatory occupants
- 5. Non-evacuation strategies for protecting occupants "Shelter in place"



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

47

NFPA 1620 QUICK OVERVIEW

Water Supplies and Fire Protection Systems

- 1. Available water supply
- 2. Static water sources
- 3. Hydrant location
- 4. Fire Pump room
- 5. FDC locations
- 6. Non-water based protection systems
- 7. Fire alarm control unit location



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

48

Hazardous Materials

- 1. Types of hazmats on location
- 2. Inventory
- 3. Location
- 4. Special extinguishing agent location
- 5. Location of MSDS sheets



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

4 9

49

NFPA 1620 QUICK OVERVIEW

Vacant and Abandoned Structures

- 1. Last known type of occupancy
- 2. Open shafts
- 3. Pits & holes due to removed equipment
- 4. Structural degradation due to weather and vandalism
- 5. Exposed structural members
- 6. Penetrations in barriers that allow abnormal fire travel
- 7. Combustible contents
- 8. Maze-like configurations
- 9. Blocked or damaged stairwells
- 10. Potential for delay in discovery of fire
- 11. Potential for a multi-room fire on arrival
- 12. Exposure issues from nearby structures

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

5 0

NFPA 1620 SUMMARY

- Pre-incident plans should be created in conjunction with the builder/ developer
- Every FD needs to have a policy, procedures, and forms for pre-incident planning
- The plans need to be accessible, reliable, and kept current
- · Program needs to be supervised



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

5 1

51



STRATEGY & TACTICS

Once ignition occurs, the series of events that result in the fire department response and suppression activities become the number one priority.

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

5 2

OPERATIONS DIVISION

- Every FD has different capabilities, so any specific talk of strategy and tactics would be meaningless without knowing the capacity of your individual department to deploy fire suppression resources.
- The focus will be on a couple very straightforward observations about fighting fires on construction sites.



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

5 3

53



FIRE DEPARTMENT CAPACITY

"If You Have a Big Nail, You Need a Big Hammer!"

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

5 4

FIRE DEPARTMENT CAPACITY

- Not all FD's are the same: Some are staffed on a full-time basis and have multiple fire stations, some are not.
- It is critical that the person(s) who prepares that pre-fire plan work with the fire department to understand the level of service they can provide
- Site supervisors when developing should meet early with the operations bureau to establish criteria for several components of the plan including vehicle access and water supply
- Also to be discussed, is whether the local department has the capacity to handle
 a fire on site or whether it will rely on outside resources to assist in controlling
 the fire



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

5 5

55

LOCAL RESOURCES AND MUTUAL AID

- <u>Automatic Aid</u>: an agreement between communities where equipment can be automatically be sent to an emergency without the IC requesting it. Programmed into the CAD and will dispatch when the box is struck out.
- <u>Mutual Aid</u>: A reciprocal agreement between departments that agree to help each other when requested.
- Mutual aid or automatic aid usually play a part in all large construction fires, most FD's do not have the capacity to fight a large fire and cover the jurisdiction at the same time.
- Fire Departments should compare its capacity to the target hazards involved and plan accordingly.

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

5 6

THE BASICS

- Building materials and contents have changed, but firefighting hasn't changed its basic tools; we use water and hoses to suppress fires
- We make decisions to enter a structure based on a series of factors: smoke color, flame spread...experience
- Our understanding of ventilation and the movement hot air and gases has become more refined over the years



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

5 7

57

FIRES DURING CONSTRUCTION

 Tactics and strategy employed by fire departments vary considerably from community to community. There are standards for both staffing and the apparatus and there are many suggested guidelines. The ultimate choice on how a fire department chooses to fight a fire is based upon their knowledge and their policies and procedures.



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

58



WATER SUPPLY

Water supply is the single biggest factor on what strategy an incident commander will use on a large construction fire.

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

5 9

59

FIRE FLOW

- The determination of fire flow is a common function in fire prevention bureaus and building departments.
- American Water Works Association publishes Manual M31 which is used to determine fire flow for an occupied structure.
- ISO has a calculation for Needed Fire Flow (NFF) expressed in GPM it considers many factors: construction type, building size and sprinklers. It also assumes that the structure is ready for occupancy.
- Calculating fire flows assumes that all fire mitigation factors are in place.
- Fires during construction hit their peak heat production differently than for an occupied structure: That single factor may determine the effectiveness of the initial attack and the overall strategy!

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

6 0

WATER SUPPLY

- As stated previously, the basic fire flow calculations are for a structure once completed
- A fire during construction will have a different demand because the various built-in fire protection systems my not be online
- It is advantageous to have multiple mains as your fire ground water supply possibly from two different streets



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

6 1

61

WATER SUPPLY

The Incident Commander must ask themselves 3 question:

- · Is the water supply is adequate to suppress the fire?
- If not, can more water be brought to bear in a timely manner?
- Is there access to the building for an interior attack?
- If the answer to the above three question is "no" it's time to take a defensive posture and protect the exposures.



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

6 2

WHAT THE CODE SAYS: WATER SUPPLY - NFPA

 Fire protection water supply (temporary or permanent) shall be available once combustible material accumulates - NFPA 241

 Where underground water main or hydrants are to be provided, they shall be installed, completed, and in service prior to start of

construction



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

63

63

WHAT THE CODE SAYS: WATER SUPPLY - IFC

- An approved water supply for fire protection...shall be made available as soon as combustible materials arrive on the site. IFC Sec. 3312
- What is considered an approved water supply that meets the requirements of the IFC or NFPA 241?
- Fire flow requirements (during construction) are coming in the 2021 IFC!



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

6 4

WATER SUPPLY: EXAMPLE OF LOCAL INTERPRETATION

- The minimum fire flow required when the contractor brings combustible materials on site is 1,500 gpm at 25 psi
- At least one hydrant shall be within 500 feet of any combustible materials
- Contractor is responsible for ensuring that the water supply is available at all times



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

65

CASE STUDY- ROCKVILLE, MD 40 UPPER ROCK

- 149 unit, 4 story, construction fire
- Montgomery County, MD Fire Chief stated that to control the fire his units were flowing as much as 20K gpm.
- How many jurisdictions could generate that flow?
- If adequate water is not available, operations must shift to exposure protection



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

66

WATER SUPPLY- INTERIOR ATTACK

- Do we have the water supply to support an interior attack?
- Do we have adequate personnel to conduct an interior attack?
- Are the standpipes in service?
- Is the FDC readily accessible?
- · Is it safe to conduct an interior attack?

 Do we have enough water to suppress the fire or do we use the bulk of the water supply to cover the exposures?



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

67



FIRE DEPARTMENT ACCESS

Can't fight it, if you can't get near it!

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

6 8

WHAT THE CODE SAYS: FIREFIGHTING ACCESS

EXTERIOR:

- Designate a suitable location as a command post provided with plans, emergency info, keys, and communications
- Every building must be accessible by a road with an all weather driving surface of at least 20' of unobstructed width, 13.5' in height.
- Dead-end roads more than 150' must include a turnaround
- Access road(s) must be within 150' of all exterior 1st floor walls



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildin

6 9

69

WHAT THE CODE SAYS: FIREFIGHTING ACCESS

STAIRS:

- Provide at least one useable stairway at all times
- Extended upward as each floor is completed
- Stairways must be lighted
- Enclose stairways once exterior walls are complete
- Provide identification signs to include floor level, stair designation, and exit path direction



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

7 0

WHAT THE CODE SAYS: FIREFIGHTING ACCESS

STANDPIPES:

- · Maintain in conformity with building progress and ready for use
- Install at least one standpipe, prior to construction exceeding 40', within one floor of the highest point of construction (IFC Section 3313.1)
- Must be conspicuously marked and readily accessible FDC
- · One hose outlet on each floor



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

7 1

71



INITIAL ATTACK

"Go Big, or Go Home!"

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

7 2

SPOTTING THE APPARATUS

- Consider the higher radiant heat with construction fires- recurring theme.
- Do not spot apparatus in the collapse zone
- · Save room for aerial apparatus



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

73

73

INITIAL ATTACK

Charging the FDC as soon as possible is critical for making an interior attack.

Firefighters should be prepared to "go big" quickly!

- Generate as much fire flow as possible
- Consider a 2-1/2" blitz line early on
- · Get master streams & aerial ops in place ASAP

EXPECT RAPID FIRE SPREAD



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

74

CASE STUDY: FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA





Date: February 8, 2020

Time: Approximately 8am

Location:2800 block of Poag Street, Penn Daw, Fairfax

County, VA

Response: 5 Alarms- Firefighters from Alexandria, Arlington, Fort Belvoir and Prince George's County

assisted Fairfax County.

Injuries: One firefighter and one civilian (passerby)

were taken for minor injuries



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

7 5

75

FIRST ARRIVING UNIT



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

76

CASE STUDY- BOUND BROOK, NJ

From the time the fire was reported until the first arriving unit arrived and immediately called for a second alarm-

8 MINUTES



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

77

77



RADIANT HEAT CONCERNS

The fire department must make protecting exposures a priority.

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

78

HEAT PRODUCTION DURING FIRES

- <u>Total heat release</u>: total number of BTU's released when all of the fuel is consumed.
- Peak heat release: When BTU's are at its highest rate.
- Peak heat release rate is a key factor related to exposure fires.
- Neighboring buildings are most at risk when a fire hits its peak release rate.
- Construction Fires and occupied structure fires can have the same total heat release but have two vastly different peak heat release rates.

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

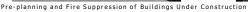
7 9

79

CASE STUDY: WILSONVILLE, OR MARCH 31, 2019

- \$10 million loss
- 1am in the morning
 - Three alarms
 - Several exposure fires
- · Four-story wood-frame
 - 20-unit apartment building
- · Largest Fire in Wilsonville History
- · Incendiary fire- ATF







Courtesy the Oregonian



Courtesy the Oregonian

RADIANT HEAT CONCERNS



Wide Streets



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Constru

81

RADIANT HEAT CONCERNS



No Water Supply issues



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Const

RADIANT HEAT CONCERNS



14 cars and trucks burned even ones parked across the street



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Constru

83

RADIANT HEAT- BOUND BROOK, NJ

Units had to pull out of position 18 minutes from the report of the fire because of excessive radiant heat



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

8 4

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: FIRE INVESTIGATION

- Fire losses in large construction projects involve many interests; i.e. lenders, developers, owners, insurance companies, some projects are publicly funded.
- The fire will be investigated as a criminal act (arson) until proven otherwise.
- Documentation and collection of physical evidence at the scene is critically important.
- IC need to take note of all factor relevant to origin and cause and protect scene from any unnecessary activities that could destroy evidence.
- NFPA 921 is the *Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations*.

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

8 5

85

FIREFIGHTER SAFETY

- Offensive vs. Defensive operations?
- The National Fallen Firefighter Foundation supports the decision that firefighters do not enter buildings in which life safety is not an issue.
- If it is verified that the structure under construction is NOT occupied, defensive firefighting may make more sense.



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under con

8 6

FIREFIGHTER SAFETY- SUMMARY

- · Access for firefighting is an extremely important consideration.
- Spot the apparatus properly.
- · Consider an adequate collapse zone.
- Choose the most appropriate tactic: Offensive or Defensive
- · Suitable location for incident command.



Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

87

87

CONCLUSION

Even when the fire service does everything correctly; Even with early notification, ample water supply and full FD access;

Buildings can be lost and; Fires can jump wide streets and destroy other buildings.

What can be controlled?

The most important consideration: **EVERYONE GOES HOME!**

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

8 8

CONCLUSION

"Everyone Goes Home!"

(1) Strategy & Tactics

We reviewed fire prevention strategies and firefighting operational tactics in the event of a fire. (3) Firefighter Safety

We discussed firefighter safety considerations.

2 Codes & Standards

We reviewed safeguards during construction codes in *NFPA 241, IFC* Chapter 33, *NFPA 1 and NFPA 1620* 4 Fire Safety Plans

We went through components of a well-prepared fire safety plan.

Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction

8 9

89

FOLLOW-UP

Ray O'Brocki- ROBrocki@awc.org, 410.299.9681

FAQs - www.awc.org/education/faqs

You will receive notice of your Certificate/CEUs within one week

Save the Dates!

Wed, Jun 10 - I-Joists and Firefighter Safety

Fri, Jun 12 – I-Joists and Firefighter Safety





Pre-planning and Fire Suppression of Buildings Under Construction



Questions?????????

Thanks for your attention! Contact me at ROBrocki@awc.org or 410.299.9681

91



info@awc.org | www.awc.org

This concludes The American Institute of Architects Continuing Education Systems Course

This presentation is protected by US and International Copyright laws. Reproduction, distribution, display and use of the presentation without written permission of American Wood Council (AWC) is prohibited. © American Wood Council 2017