

# FIRE



# TRAINING

VOLUME 28 ♦ ISSUE 9 ♦ SEPTEMBER 2024

## TRUCK COMPANY OPERATIONS

# SAW BASICS

*Dewayne Tiemeyer – Indianapolis, IN, Fire Department*

### **SMALL GASOLINE ENGINES**

#### **General operating principles**

2-cycle engines are usually used on chain saws and rotary saws in the fire service. The 2-cycle engine has no oil crankcase. The lubrication for the internal parts is through a mixture of special oil and gasoline being injected in the cylinder. Check your owner's manual for the proper oil to fuel ratio. It is typically 40:1 or 50:1, some may be different. Because they have no oil crankcase they can be operated in almost any position. Too much oil can cause the motor to smoke excessively and will foul the spark plug quicker. Not enough oil will cause the internal engine parts to be damaged.

Using a quality 2-cycle oil, if you choose to mix your own, is recommended. Make sure to give your gas can a shake to

ensure proper distribution of the oil/fuel, especially if it has been sitting for some time. Many departments are going with already premixed fuel. These premixed fuels do not contain ethanol, will have the correct oil mix ratios, and extended shelf life. This takes any of the guesswork out and the shelf life is good for up to 2 years. Since these motors run hotter and faster than 4-cycle engines, they will need their spark plugs changed more often and are more sensitive to stale gas.

### **TO START THE ENGINE**

All small gas engines need at least 4 things to start and run:

- Cylinder compression, when you pull the starter cord you feel the "pop-pop" of the piston cycling in a tight engine.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

*Truck Company Operations*  
Training and the  
Truck Company .....5

*Engine Company Operations*  
Engine Basics:  
The Attack Line .....7

Simple Engine Drills:  
Beyond the Preconnect .....9

*Company Officer Toolbox*  
Be Technically &  
Tactically Proficient .....10

Making Decisions .....13

*Fireground Training*  
What is a Trainer? .....14

\*\*\*\*\*

2025 Training Calendar .....12

**TRAINING SAVES LIVES  
FIREFIGHTERS**

[www.fdtraining.com](http://www.fdtraining.com)



**TRAINING SAVES LIVES**

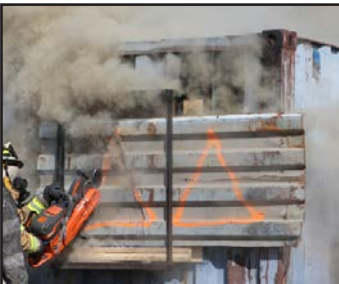
**THE MOST REALISTIC LIVE-FIRE SKILL-BUILDING REPETITIONS YOU'LL GET AT ANYWHERE!**



# LIVE-FIRE TRAINING CAMP

**LIVE-FIRE SKILLS TRAINING  
DESIGNED TO GIVE YOU  
STREET-EXPERIENCE**

**APRIL 6-8, 2025**



**BASEMENT FIRES • HOARDER FIRES • RIT • FORCIBLE ENTRY • SEARCH OPERATIONS  
REGISTER TODAY AT [WWW.FDTRAINING.COM](http://WWW.FDTRAINING.COM)**



## FIRE DEPARTMENT TRAINING NETWORK

Publisher: Fire Department Training Network, Inc.

**FIRE TRAINING** is the official publication of the Fire Department Training Network, Inc. The Network is dedicated to increasing fire fighter awareness, knowledge, skill, and ability, through quality training. The opinions expressed are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Network. Materials may not be reproduced without permission. **FIRE TRAINING**, and the **FIRE TRAINING** logo, are trademarks of the Fire Department Training Network, Inc.

ISSN: 2166-918X

Join us in sharing training information. Submit your material to: Fire Department Training Network, P.O. Box 1852, Indianapolis, IN 46206. E-mail: [info@fdtraining.com](mailto:info@fdtraining.com).

© 2024 Fire Department Training Network

# FIRE TRAINING

Welcome to the Fire Department Training Network's monthly training journal, **FIRE TRAINING**, the only blue-collar, street-smart, training magazine dedicated to firefighters, fire officers, and firefighting!

**TRAINING SAVES LIVES  
FIREFIGHTERS**



**SAWS...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

- Fuel being delivered to the carburetor, functioning fuel line, clean filter.
  - Spark to a functioning spark plug.
  - Air, coming through a filter into the carburetor.
- If one of these 4 things are missing or out of adjustment you can have problems starting your small engine.

**Starting a Cold 2-cycle Engine**

- Fully pull the choke (on most saws fully setting the choke puts the saw into high idle). Some of the older mainly rotary saws simply pulling the choke doesn't put it in high idle. You'll need to pull the throttle and push in the silver button and then release the throttle, this will put that saw into high idle before starting.
- Press the decompression switch if the saw has one. Pull the starter cord, short quick pulls elbow high should be plenty, any more may stretch or even break the rope.
- When the saw "chugs" or tries to start, push the choke in. If you're quick you may keep it running. If not, Press the decompression switch again.
- Pull starter cord until the saw starts.

By starting the saw at the start of every shift you should start to get a feel for what the motor sounds and even feels like. Just by the way it starts and the way it sounds you should have an inclination that something isn't right. That takes starting the saw countless times and running it properly. This comes in especially handy when starting the saw at 2am in a dark environment or even on a roof.

If a saw is still warm there may not be a need to use the choke to start the saw. By resetting the choke when it is not needed there is a good chance you will flood the saw. We'll get into starting a flooded saw in a bit.

In the steps above I mentioned pushing in the decompression switch. If a saw is equipped with a decompression switch it allows for easier starting sure, however if you happen to forget to press the switch, often times, you can still pull through that compression stroke without issue especially on a saw that is older. Some saws aren't even equipped with the decompression switch anymore.

**STARTING A FLOODED SAW**

There's gonna be times when your saw gets flooded. We'll blame it on the guy working overtime or the new guy but let's face it sometimes we flood the saw. A saw floods when we have multiple failed attempts to start and get too much fuel in the carburetor. Maybe our surround-



ings are loud and you don't hear that initial chug which indicates to push the choke in. One pull past that chug and you can flood your saw. The most noticeable indication will be a strong smell of gasoline. The fuel to air mixture is too rich in the cylinder to ignite and start the engine.

The choke needs to be pushed in and the throttle held to full throttle while also pulling the starter rope sharply. This can take multiple attempts. It's easiest to accomplish this task with 2 people. Once it does start the chain will likely not start to turn right away and the engine will most likely be giving off an abnormal amount of smoke. Just keep that throttle wide open to burn that fuel off and after a few seconds the saw should start running normally.

A saw can flood multiple times and still be operational if you follow the steps above but after numerous times of flooding your saw the spark plug will eventually need to be replaced.

**MORNING SAW CHECKS...**

*This is our DAILY check...Not to be confused with heading to the roof to open up! If we're heading to the roof there is no warm up period. Get to the roof, find the right spot, open it up, and get off the roof.*

We more than likely have seen someone or have been guilty ourselves of starting the saw, running it at 100% of its RPMs, engaging the chain brake and then shutting it down all in the matter of seconds. Imagine doing that same thing to your vehicle, starting it up, pushing the gas pedal to the floor down the road for 100 yards, slamming the brakes and then turning off the engine and imagine doing this every morning day after day. It's going to drastically limit the life of that engine.

The proper check of the saw each morning should take at a minimum 1 to 2 minutes. Start the saw following the steps above. Since pulling that choke will put it in high

*CONTINUED ON PAGE 4*





## TRAINING SAVES LIVES

SAWS...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

idle, once that saw starts and begins to warm up the chain/blade will start moving, let it move, let it warm up a couple seconds before hitting the throttle to take it out of high idle. Now bring the throttle back up to roughly 70-75% of its operating RPMs and hold the throttle there for a good 30-45 seconds. Keep the chain close to the ground during this time so you can see how much bar chain oil your saw is putting out (should be a fine mist, not too much and not too little). Most of these chainsaws are able to run upwards of 13,000 RPMs but when you put it under a load (cutting a roof) the RPMs will drop somewhere in that 70-75% range so that's where we want to test that saw each morning. After the 30-45 seconds of running the saw then exercise that throttle all the way and down a couple of times. Now let the saw sit at idle for another 20-30 seconds to allow it cool properly and bring in some fresh fuel. Now you can shut it down and top off the fuel and bar chain oil.

I mentioned earlier to see how much bar chain oil was coming off your saw, if it's too much or too little there should be an adjustment on the bottom side of the saw typically with a schematic of oil drop and + and -. There should be a screw to adjust. If your saw is set up properly it should run out of fuel before it runs out of bar chain oil.

This is also a good time to inspect your chain. First and foremost making sure the chain is facing the right direction. And then a good rule of thumb is if the chain has 3 teeth in a row or a total of 6 teeth missing, it's time to replace that chain. Lastly, making sure your chain has the

proper tension. You should just be able to fit a dime between the bar and the guides of the chain. Also, don't forget the bar should be flipped over each time you clean the saw to extend the life of that bar. Always putting the bar on the same way will eventually start to mushroom the bar where the constant pressure is applied. Flipping it back and forth should double the life.

Here's a quick tip: we've all had that stubborn saw that will start but shut down before we can transition our finger back to the throttle. So we pull the starter cord again only to have it die again before we can get to that throttle. If it's during that morning check then troubleshoot it and find out what's causing this. However, when you're on the fireground you don't have time for that. You can do a "hot start" Simply pull the choke out and immediately push the choke back in. Again, most saws, doing this puts the saw in high idle and when you pull the starter cord, especially on an already warm saw, that chain is going to take off and allow you to get your finger on that throttle and hopefully allow you to finish getting that hole opened up. Use caution as always when using a saw but starting a warmed up saw that's placed in high idle will have immediate rotation of the chain.

We're looking at extending the longevity of our saws and making sure they are ready to go when needed. Following these general principles should accomplish both tasks.

## TRAINING SAVES LIVES



### Designing, Constructing, & Operating Container-Based Training Props

FDTN is known for its creative and functional use of shipping containers to provide some of the most realistic fireground training available to today's firefighters. FDTN's National Fireground Training Academy currently operates 8 fully-functional container-based training props capable of creating both simulated and realistic fireground conditions for firefighters to practice and learn the skills needed during actual fireground operations.

This all-new training course is designed to assist departments who are ready to take their training to the next level by creating and operating container-based training props —*designed around actual department needs*. For more information contact FDTN or visit [www.fdtraining.com](http://www.fdtraining.com).



MAY 19-21, 2025



## TRUCK COMPANY OPERATIONS

# TRAINING & THE TRUCK COMPANY

*Excerpted from FDTN's Fireground Training Officer Manual*

Truck company training is simple: Practice the basic skills over and over until they become instinctive. After that, practice some more! The more you train, the faster you'll start operating at an advanced level on the fireground. What many people don't realize is that you really can't perform those more advanced operations until you've mastered the basics. After all, advanced skills are nothing more than basic skills that have been adapted to handle particular fireground variables.

One of the most common excuses for not conducting training is "we don't have a training facility." Give me a break! If you have a firehouse, then you have a facility. Sure, you may not be able to perform *all* the training you want without making some additional effort, but you should be able to perform *most* of it. And for those skills that do require a little more effort—like building a prop or gathering some materials—as the saying goes, just do it!

With this in mind, the following are some training ideas that cover basic truck company functions.

### **AERIAL APPARATUS TRAINING**

When it comes to the rig, start with the basics. Make sure everyone is able to operate it (meaning they can drive it and use it). The apparatus should be exercised on a daily basis. In fact, this is actually more like a daily rig check—but one where everyone gets to operate the rig. Pick a certain day and have everyone use the rig so they keep up their skills in this area. Want to make it fun? For a little extra enjoyment, place a cone or other object on the roof of the station or in a window and have a little competition.

Have your folks position the rig, set it up, and operate and position the ladder (or platform) as quickly as possible. The winner gets some bragging rights at lunch. And actually, everyone is a winner because they all got to practice this skill—and the competition gave them a little stress/enjoyment!

### **FORCIBLE ENTRY**

This type of training may require a little more effort if you don't have a forcible-entry prop—but only once. There are plenty of designs available to help you build a prop. *Tip:* Go to your local home improvement store and see if they'll donate any damaged doors or even some wood to help you make a prop.

Conventional forcible entry using the irons is a skill that every firefighter should be proficient with—it should be instinctive. You should be able to force inward-swinging doors, outward-swinging doors, wood doors in wood frames, metal doors in metal frames, doors in light/moderate/heavy smoke conditions—basically any variations you might run into in your response area.

Commercial forcible entry involving the rotary saw is actually a bit easier to practice. You just need to find some metal. Again, a simple re-useable prop goes a long way. If you have a local metal shop or scrap yard, see if they'll donate some material. Worst-case scenario: You may have to buy some rebar and build a small cutting T to allow you to cut using the saw in multiple positions. But it's worth it. You must be proficient with working the saw

*CONTINUED ON PAGE 6*



TRUCK...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

and knowing the cuts to make for different doors. If you're lucky, you may even be able to find a few overhead doors in your district to practice on—possibly at a vacant building being demolished or through an overhead door company with new installs. Check around.

## **SEARCH TRAINING**

Search training is often overlooked. One of the main reasons: The majority of the training is downright boring. That's right, boring! The solution: Make it realistic and challenging.

Start with the basics. Set up a few stations where everyone has to identify—and differentiate—realistic objects. Take a set of bed linens and blankets, a few kids' toys and a life-size child manikin, and practice searching through that pile of materials until you can identify the child. Blacked-out or artificial smoke conditions while breathing air will increase the realistic feel of the training and help develop some additional skills

Once everyone has had a chance to run through the skill-building session, allow two- or three-person search teams to search multiple rooms that are set up with realistic furnishings and dummies with heat packs/wraps. Incorporate the use of a thermal imaging camera for both accountability and victim location.

## **LADDERS**

Here's a training session that doesn't require additional effort, like building a prop. Get the ladders off the rig and practice single-person carries and throws—that's right, single-person! Books are great at depicting more people than you'll actually have on the fireground. But training with unrealistic numbers won't help when you arrive and have to get the job done with fewer people.

Once you've practiced throwing and placing ladders to the roof, window, etc., by yourself, then incorporate moving the ladder—and the tools you'll need—from the rig to the building, and throwing the ladder. Then go to work (see venting and VES below).

Don't forget to practice two-person carries and throws as well. When it comes to the 35-footer (or longer), you'll need to get your communication skills dialed in so you and your partner can throw it efficiently.

## **VENT, ENTER, SEARCH**

After the ladder reviews, take a shot at reviewing VES—as a complete evolution. Set up a simple training

---

*After all, advanced skills are nothing more than basic skills that have been adapted to handle particular fireground variables.*

---

session using a second-floor window (add a drywall window prop to allow for simulated glass-breaking). Have each person carry and throw a 24' ladder, raise and ascend the ladder, vent the window and then enter the room and search it. *Remember:* Close the door to the room, search it and communicate along the way. For an added challenge, use two windows so that both windows need to be searched, requiring the ladder to be moved after completing the first room.

## **VENTING**

Here's a session that requires a bit more preparation, but the fireground rewards speak for themselves.

The first part of the session should incorporate a saw review and simple maintenance station. Like the aerial training, this should actually be a daily check so it becomes part of your normal routine.

Pick a day and take the time to do some actual cutting. If you're fortunate enough to have a nearby training location, then take your crew out for some cutting. If you don't have a location, then collect some pallets or build a small prop that you can use at the firehouse. Get creative—maybe you can store it on the roof!

The bottom line here is to get some quality saw time—both chainsaw and rotary saw (for roof operations). After exercising your saw skills, throw a few more involved evolutions into the mix. Carry a ladder and your equipment to the building, raise the ladder, get to the roof (or prop) and cut a vent hole. Review the most common cuts you'll use (peak and flat roof), and don't forget to practice everyone's favorite cutting method—using a hand tool!

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

There are plenty of other training sessions for truck work, but these few should be part of your normal routine. If you want to make things (or keep them) simple, then determine those 15 to 20 truck skills that make up your truck work. That's right—there aren't that many individual skills, so hopefully your bubble didn't just burst. If you remember the first part of the article, advanced truck work comes from being able to adapt those basic skills to the problem at hand. It's really simple stuff.



**ENGINE COMPANY OPERATIONS**

# ENGINE BASICS: THE ATTACK LINE

*John Keenan, Battalion Chief (retired) - FDNY*

Remember 90% of all working fires are extinguished with one 1¾-inch hose line within 10-15 minutes of arrival. Different structure fires require different hose line techniques. Arriving at a multiple dwelling fire you and your other two firefighters start stretching a 1¾-inch hose line to the third floor of a four story wood frame dwelling. Fire is showing out of two windows on the third floor and there is a heavy smoke condition on the fourth floor.

As the nozzle man, you pull off the first two lengths of hose and stand to the side as your backup person also removes two lengths of hose giving you four lengths ready to be stretched. The estimated hose stretch is four lengths, one length per floor plus one length for the fire area. You and your backup person begin the stretch into the structure, being the first to enter the fire building you chock the front entrance door and proceed up the stairs to the third floor carrying your length of hose. The backup person drops his lengths at the base of the interior stairs and helps stretch the additional lengths up the stairs. Reaching the fire floor the backup person helps get rid of the kinks and teams up with the nozzle person.

With the officer, nozzle man and backup man in position the officer will call for water. Being that the nozzle man has cracked open the nozzle a little a hiss of air will be heard before the water reaches the nozzle letting him know that water is on its way.

At this point in time the ladder company members should have arrived and force the fire apartment door and performed their primary search. The engine officer should have the nozzle team against the wall alongside the

entrance door not in front of the fire door. When all truckies have exited the fire apartment the officer will start the advance momentarily letting the smoke and heat escape the apartment. This will hopefully prevent the nozzle team from getting burnt. As you enter the fire area move to the side of the door this way the nozzle team will be out of the path of exiting heat and smoke. Aim the nozzle upward rotating it counter-clockwise and advance slowly staying low.



**STAY LOW, STAY LOW, STAY LOW!!!!**

I can't say that enough times. I don't know where we are going in the fire service when it comes to engine techniques. While I might not be popular with the statement "Stay down on your knees" I will tell you from experience that most burn injuries to engine firefighters are concentrated to their ears and neck. This occurs when the engine company is advancing their attack line and they place themselves in the heat zone.

Stay on your knees, if the water is starting to burn your knees then get up on your feet, but be careful the heat line

*CONTINUED ON PAGE 8*





*ATTACK LINE...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7*

is going to be right above your head and if you are not careful you are going to get burnt. Sweep the floor in front of you and then get back down. As you get closer to the seat of the fire the heat line will be lower. If you duck walk or extend your legs in front of you, you are placing yourself in the heat zone and are very unstable.

I have to make a point here. I take my engine operations seriously. Nothing bothers me more than when one of my firefighters comes to me and says “Chief I’m going to transfer to the truck, I’ve put in a good year in the engine and have learned all there is to learn!”

First, how many actual first due fires has this individual been at and how many of them had he been the nozzle man, I assume not many. Second, nothing could be further from the truth. I have spent the last 33 years honing my engine and truck techniques. I still don’t know everything, but I due claim to have the fortune of working in the south Bronx, and Harlem during the war years and have gained a lot of respect for the little person on the nozzle putting out the fire. It is said, “As the first line goes, so does the fire.” So pay attention.

**KEY POINTS:**

- Hook up to a reliable water source.
- Stretch enough hose don’t stretch short.
- Chock the front door to the building so uncharged line will not get caught under the door.

***Remember 90% of all working fires are extinguished with one 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-inch hose line within 10-15 minutes of arrival.***

- Remember what nozzle you are using.
- Don’t enter fire area without a charged line.
- Stay to the side, not in front of the entrance to the fire area.
- Wait a few seconds before entering fire area. This will let heat and smoke escape.
- Once inside, move to one side of the doorway. This will keep you away from escaping heat and smoke.
- Keep stream operating upward and in front of you using the reach of the stream to extinguish as much fire as possible before advancing the line.
- Stay low.
- If your knees are getting hot, slow down the advance and sweep the floor in front of you.
- If you have to stand up do so slowly but stay as low as possible, you will be placing yourself in the heat zone.
- Remember to listen to the sound of the stream, this will give an indication of which direction to proceed.



**OCTOBER 6-9, 2025**

*FDTN’s scenario-based training experience....*

**FIRE COMBAT:** The 4-day experience will provide attendees the opportunity to respond to, and gain experience operating at, a significant number of working fires. The course is divided into 6 working tours-of-duty and attendees will respond as members of either an engine, truck, or rescue company. Companies are assigned an officer and 2 firefighters, new assignments are made at the start of each tour, and members will fill all company positions throughout the training.

6 companies, 3 firehouses, live dispatch, real-time fireground decision-making, SOPs, training, report-writing...PLUS multiple working fires to develop street experience during training!

***Register today at [\*\*FIRE TRAINING\*\*](http://fitraining.com!</a></i></b></p></div><div data-bbox=)***





**ENGINE COMPANY OPERATIONS**

# SIMPLE ENGINE DRILLS: BEYOND THE PRECONNECT

*Pete Partridge, Battalion Chief (retired) – Newark, NJ, Fire Department*

A great weakness of many engine companies is their inability to make long stretches. The average stretch of the average engine company is no more than 4 lengths, unless you work in a district with huge buildings or long set-backs. Most engines by far have preconnected crosslays of 3 or 4 lengths and that's all they use.

But what happens when you have to go beyond that? What happens when you need to stretch a 2½-inch? What happens when the bed is not pre-connected?

For most engines, stretching a 2½-inch for any distance, and stretching an 1¾-inch line more than 4 lengths are unusual occasions. And it gets sloppy.

**HERE'S A FEW SIMPLE DRILLS:**

- Drill on stretching 6 lengths of 1¾-inch. Why 6 lengths? That is considered to be the maximum practical stretch of 1¾-inch hose before friction loss becomes too great to deliver the required flow.
- Drill on stretching 6 or 8 lengths of 2½-inch hose as a leader line for 1¾-inch hose. Use a gated wye on the 2½-inch.
- Drill on stretching 6 or 8 lengths of 2½-inch hose as an attack line.
- If you have a portable deck pipe or a blitz-fire type appliance, drill on stretching lines to get those appliances in service. A portable deck pipe may require TWO 2½-inch lines

It's ok to start out drilling on a flat surface to develop technique and smoothness BUT be SURE to graduate to rough terrain with obstacles. Many times outdoor stretches are an obstacle course. And obviously you MUST drill inside buildings; down hallways and up or down stairs. If you have such buildings, drill on well-hole stretches and wrap-around stair (elevator in the middle) stretching, as well as standard stair stretches. Many building owners and schools will cooperate as long as NO water is involved.

Part of these drills also involves flaking out the extra line. Remember, narrow hallways equal kinks. Corners equal kinks. Try to flake UP the stairs above rather than DOWN below. It's easier to pull the line down than up. Remember, if you can make a loop in the line back from the nozzle, it's easier to advance the line.

The ONLY reason for engine companies to exist is to use hose. Make sure you are EXPERT in hose operations!





COMPANY OFFICER TOOLBOX

# BE TECHNICALLY & TACTICALLY PROFICIENT

*Ben Fleagle, Battalion Chief — University, AK, Fire Department*

To fight fire. Its never been an easy job. Oh, we will admit, not all firefighters have to work at the same level of intensity on a regular basis. But when there is a job to get done, its a job. Fire is an impartial taskmaster. There are houses that have never ceased to be busy, in spite of economic change, always work to do. When I was new to the job, the Loo told me to get to a busy house and I managed to start off in one, but as I have moved up in rank there have been many hours in various houses, waiting and waiting for the call to come in. If you're not living in a Metropolitan area, you are unlikely to have a working fire per shift, let alone two. Although, even in small cities, there are days....Sit down. Coffee's hot, pour yourself a cup and we'll talk some more about these things called "Leadership Principles."

## **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE #2: BE TECHNICALLY AND TACTICALLY PROFICIENT"**

Maintain a high level of competence in your fire profession throughout your career. If you're on the truck, be a top shelf Truckie! If you're on the Engine, make it your passion! If you're like me and you run on a Quint, you best be good at both! Your proficiency will earn the respect of your firefighters. All of us, regardless of the number of runs we log, are responsible to our members for the level of proficiency we provide to them. Back in the days of old, when our job consisted primarily of fire runs, the list of competencies was minimal compared to today. But proficiency to some degree came with the job back then. Knowing how to fight fire was similar to most

blue collar trades. Constant repetition of skills and technological advances taking place at a moderate pace in the work place, enabled a hard working stiff to move up in the ranks with time in,.. perhaps some schooling on the side. No school like the old school. Hard work, a lot of guts. Plus many of these men had worked other trades and that experience was brought into the fire house. Looking among old photos of crews lined up for a pride shot, there is a mix of ages. Sometimes the company officers are surprisingly youthful. Usually these men are marked by a confident look in the eye. Others are middle aged, looking tolerant and gruff and so is the Chauffeur or Engineer. The hose jockeys are often very young and full of mischief, helmets and hats tilted at a rakish angle. Those are things that haven't changed much due to the nature of the job and the kind of people it attracts. But what has changed is the place where the job is done and the wide range of knowledge that the officer must master. Leadership remains an art, a skill that you must develop to be a leader of firemen. True yesterday and still very true today.

Part of that leadership skill is maintaining your tactical and technological edge. Not only your skill as a firefighter, but your knowledge of the profession is observed and tested by the men and women you lead. They expect you to have a solid foundation in such things, they have been led to believe that you do. They are a little disappointed when that foundation isn't there. Such are the things an officer must do to earn the respect and cooperation of those he or she leads. Being knowledgeable and proficient



in the job is one of the primary ones and sadly is often one of the first to slip. And we get away with it for a while. I don't mean to give the wrong impression. I know there are many excellent officers out there. I applaud the example they set. But there are also many who spend their days doing everything except preparing themselves for the test to come. If you're in a small town, the chances of your knowledge being put to the test in front of the crew (or worse; leading to their injury or death), are reduced. If you're in a big city working on the edge of "Crack St. and Central" then the chances of your knowledge and proficiency being tested are certainly higher, but usually in a focused area. In my first due, it isn't the fully involved structure that concerns me, its the room and contents fires, the basement fires, the lightweight construction...those fires, will test me. And that is just the fire end of this business. A small town fire officer must excel or be well versed at being an EMT or a Paramedic, Hazmat, extrication and technical rescue, an instructor, and familiar with an ever expanding set of technologically advanced equipment. The list is long.

I'm probably preaching to the choir on this one. After all, if you're reading this, than you're probably already lined out in this department. But be careful. Complacency creeps in on even the best of us. Fighting the inevitable lack of desire to keep moving forward is critical for the "Battle Ready" officer. I don't always like the changes I see, but I don't want to be left behind in the dust, either. So I purposely focus on the things that are most likely to affect the people I lead and the job we do. Change is happening constantly now. We have to keep up. The lives of your crew members may depend on it. Even though they may never give voice to it, their confidence in you and their respect for you is based in some part on your mastery of this job. You convey that mastery by being open and honest with them about what you do and do not know and what you are doing to improve.

There are officers who put up a fantastic front. Their convincing mastery of the profession is based on their behavior around the fire station, perhaps a reputation for being extremely aggressive at fires, being the tough talker or just simply getting lucky over the years. But where previous generations of young firefighters were willing to work hard, put up with verbal abuse and risk their lives without asking why, this generation of young people is a little different. They are also not afraid to work hard, not afraid to risk their lives. But they are not inclined to listen to bravado unaccompanied by action and they also like to

know the why...they like to feel as though you value their view of things and can offer them a valid reason as to why something is or is not done a certain way. Many of them are better read on tactics and the latest studies than the older crowd, and they like to show that knowledge off. If you aren't up to speed, you will not be able to offer wise counsel on the value of the latest article or blog post. Like it or not, this is how they function today. They will be able to "fact check" you on the web before you can finish blowing smoke up their backsides. Many officers are so busy with the business of administration these days, that they have little time or energy left to take on new tactics and new technology. Just when you felt like you had learned it all and you could relax a bit, they go and introduce something new on you. Then there are those of you who received your bugles through no merit or display of tactical ability, but simply by attending a certification course and putting in your time. Now, you do have to earn it. For those of you in that boat, stay out to sea, don't give fate a chance to come calling. Someone might pay for it with their lives.

This is also a generation of adventurers. They like to train. They like to go farther and push harder and you, with the reports due, the projects that you have been assigned by your battalion, the inventory, the SOP contribution you are making, have to make time and participate, to show them you are not ready to be put on the shelf...AND, you need to be there through the training to help them see the positive or negative affects of the latest fad in roof cuts, ladder tosses and nozzle moves. If your presence isn't felt here, you are abdicating your leadership. Somebody will lead in your absence, for better or worse. That being said, it is not productive to crash your way into their efforts to learn something new just so that you can show them you're savvy and already an expert. This is where the leader's character traits of Enthusiasm and Knowledge must be balanced out with good Judgement and Tact.

## **I'LL LEAVE YOU WITH THE FOLLOWING THOUGHTS:**

1. **Be real and transparent with those you lead.** We all need improvement, we all get complacent, we all make mistakes. Own up. Don't try to snow them with your objections to something you haven't studied up on and therefore can't credibly defend your stance. "We don't

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



# 2025 FDTN CALENDAR



Classes are held at the Fire Department Training Network's Academy in Indianapolis, IN.



## APRIL 2025

Spring Live-Fire Training Camp  
April 6-8 2025

## MAY 2025

Engine Company Ops I  
May 5-7, 2025

Truck Company Operations I  
May 5-7, 2025

Designing, Constructing, & Operating  
Container-Based Training props  
May 19-21, 2025

## JUNE 2025

Fireground Company Officer  
June 2-5 2025

Fireground Survival & RIT  
June 23-25 2025



## JUNE 2025

Commanding RIT Operations  
June 25, 2025

Fireground Survival & RIT  
Train-the-Trainer  
June 23-26, 2025

## AUGUST 2025

Engine Company Operations I  
August 18-20, 2025

Truck Company Operations I  
August 18-20, 2025



## SEPTEMBER 2025

Rescue Company Operations I  
September 8-11, 2025

Live-Fire Trainer  
September 29-October 2, 2025

## OCTOBER 2025

Live-Fire Trainer  
September 29-October 2, 2025

Fire Combat  
October 6-9, 2025

Fall Live-Fire Training Camp  
October 20-22, 2025

## NOVEMBER 2025

Engine Company Operations I  
November 3-5, 2025

Truck Company Operations I  
November 3-5, 2025

**REGISTER AT [WWW.FDTRAINING.COM](http://WWW.FDTRAINING.COM)**

For more information, or to register, contact the Network or visit us at: [www.fdttraining.com](http://www.fdttraining.com)



LEADERSHIP...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

*Change is happening constantly now. We have to keep up. The lives of your crew members may depend on it. Even though they may never give voice to it, their confidence in you and their respect for you is based in some part on your mastery of this job. You convey that mastery by being open and honest with them about what you do and do not know and what you are doing to improve.*

do it that way” no longer holds any sway. They want to know why it CAN’T be done that way.

2. **Be knowledgeable in current fire service issues.** Be able to say to them, “Yeah, I read about that, and this is the question I’m asking myself...” or “True, but the other side of that argument is...” For instance, Captain, what is your department’s stance on Survival Profiling? Do you know? Are you well versed in the debate? How will you justify your actions on the fire-ground to those you lead?
3. **Train with them.** Show them what you know and allow them to see that you don’t know everything and are willing to improve your understanding. Your followers will really value that kind of honesty. I have made plenty of gaffs in front of the members I lead. I find they are eager to show what they have learned, especially if I am willing to be teachable. This in turn requires me to have a solid grasp in the basics so I can validate the new information.
4. **Teach them what you know.** Don’t know what you know? Well, what are you doing wearing bugles then? Maybe you should be back in the bucket? Oh, ..yeah. Need the nice paycheck, or maybe no one ever asked you, they just promoted you...Well, Captain...it’s not too late. Begin by learning something so that you can teach them. Teaching increases the teacher’s knowledge through preparation and application as well as those being taught.
5. **Lastly, if nothing else, know your organization’s standard operating procedures, and apply them according to sound principle.** If we want our people to follow our leadership, we must also demonstrate for them our own followership to those above us. Don’t just do what the department says because the department says. Gain understanding of the reasons and thinking behind the decisions made by your superiors. If there is anything we can quickly learn from the young people filling our fire houses it’s that they don’t follow blindly. Most of them expect to be told why before they buy into commitment. But if you know and

can explain, then they will most often jump on board and be enthusiastic.

One more thing. I look at the issue this way. Many officers are promoted beyond their ability or ambition. You may not have realized when you put that brass on your collar that you had stepped into the position of role model and mentor. Well you’re there. If you set a bad example, many of those who follow you will adopt your mode and methodology. If you are honest and up front with your short comings, you might find that they’ll cut you some slack. But don’t take that to the bank. It will stretch only as far as a bumper line. You will still have to earn it.

## MAKING DECISIONS

*Clyde Gordon, District Chief  
Houston, TX, Fire Department*

In the world of leadership, the path less traveled is often the one paved with tough decisions, unwavering values, and the boldness to speak one’s truth. It’s crucial to remember that leadership is not about striving to be everyone’s favorite. It’s about making decisions that, while they may not please everyone, are in the best interest of the team and the mission at hand.

As leaders, we must embrace the reality that not everyone will like us or agree with our decisions. And that’s okay. Leadership is not a popularity contest. It’s about integrity, courage, and the resilience to stand firm in our convictions, even when faced with opposition.

The essence of true leadership lies in our ability to make difficult choices, to communicate openly and honestly, and to lead by example, consistently upholding our values. It’s about fostering an environment where respect is earned through actions, not through seeking approval.

Let’s not shy away from the tough conversations or the hard decisions. Let’s lead with authenticity, embracing the fact that while we may not be able to please everyone, we can earn their respect through our consistency, transparency, and unwavering commitment to our values.



FIREGROUND TRAINING

# WHAT IS A TRAINER?

Excerpt from FDTN's Fireground Training Officer Manual

## It's Not About You!

A fireground trainer uses a variety of skills to get the job done. It's simply not enough to be able to get up in front of a group and talk about a subject. Successful trainers appear to be doing just that but that's because they've honed many skills along the way. Here's a partial list of the skills a trainer uses to get the material across?

**Motivator.** A successful trainer motivates the audience and prepares them, continuously, for learning. A key to this ability to motivate is self motivation. It's pretty difficult to motivate others when you can't motivate yourself. If the audience is motivated the atmosphere for learning is set.

**Salesman.** Everyone sells something and fireground trainers are no different. A trainer presents material and the students need to buy in. If the students don't buy in then no training takes place. Some sales are easy but many require the constant work of the trainer to get the job done.

**Historian.** A trainer has to research the audience and the material to understand why and how they relate to each other. Part of the motivation and selling of the material comes from an understanding of why it is needed and it's history with the audience. A trainer will look into past incidents relating to the material being presented and include them in the delivery.

**Technician.** If you can't perform it, or you don't understand it, then how can you teach it? Book teaching is no more than reading aloud. Students can do that on their own. The successful trainer understands the material and is proficient at performing the skills. It becomes painfully evident, really quick, if that's not the case.

**Leader.** This speaks for itself. A trainer must be able to lead the group. Somebody has to! Have you ever been in a group, waiting for something to happen, and waiting, and waiting, until finally the group fumbles along and then

breaks up. What was lacking? A leader. A successful trainer will immediately take charge of the group and lead them to the session objective.

**Student.** A trainer is always learning. About the material, about teaching, about the students. The constant learning that takes place is continually rolled back into the delivery of the material. How many sessions have you been to that presented the same material, the same way, through the same person? Boring! When a trainer is a student the material is always fresh.

**Mind Reader.** A trainer must be able to read, and anticipate, the minds of the students. To successfully present the material the trainer must constantly keep the students pointed toward the objectives. The only way this can take place is if the trainer anticipates where they are headed and constantly adjusts the material to keep them on course.

**Comedian.** It gets pretty dry sometimes with some of the material that is presented. A little humor goes a long way to lightening up the crowd and helping the material get across. A little too much can destroy the entire session. If you enjoy it they'll have a much better chance of enjoying it.

**Brain Surgeon.** WHAT? A successful trainer has to carefully and delicately remove many mindsets! For learning to take place an individual must be open-minded. A closed mind has no way in. This is by far the most difficult skill that a trainer must become proficient at. When the trainer believes in the material and uses all of the above skills to deliver it then the mindsets can be changed.

**And More!** Successful trainers use many, many skills to remain successful.

These are just a few of the skills needed to deliver successful training. Any successful trainer realizes that they must do whatever it takes to get the material across. Once they figure this out training can be a blast!



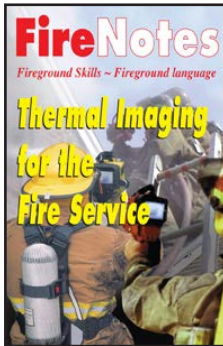
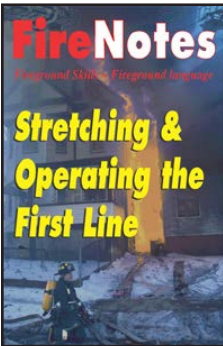
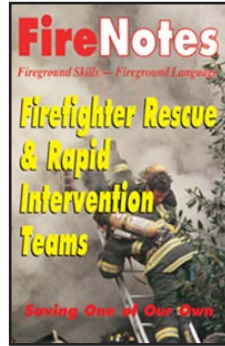
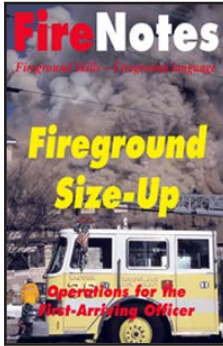
**FIRENOTES – FIREGROUND SKILLS – FIREGROUND LANGUAGE!**

The Fire Department Training Network's highly acclaimed FireNotes series of training books is unmatched! These books don't follow the standard — they are the standard! FireNotes are tell-it-like-it-is training books that are reality-based! FireNotes focus on the need-to-know not the nice-to-know. Each FireNote is filled with step-by-step instruction on the street-skills needed to get the job done.

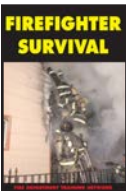
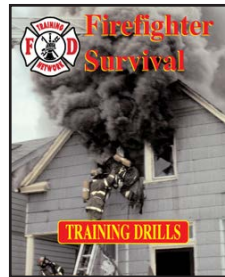
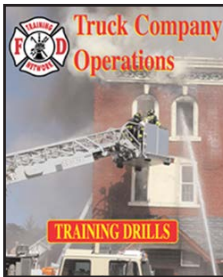
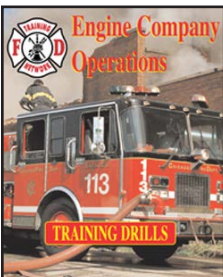
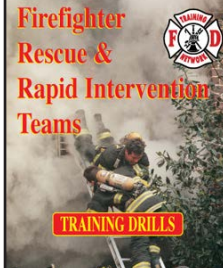


**TRAINING SAVES LIVES  
FIREFIGHTERS**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT TRAINING NETWORK, INC.**  
**P.O. BOX 1852 • INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46206**  
**FDTRAINING.COM • INFO@FDTRAINING.COM**



**TRAINING DRILLS**  
 Adapted from FDTN's highly successful monthly training package, FIRE TRAINING. Each volume contains six complete training sessions which include a session overview, resource and reference listing, lesson plan, 3 hands-on drills, student test, and a student roster.



- 50 minute DVD includes:**
- Developing a Survival Attitude
  - SCBA Knowledge
  - Mayday Management
  - Low Profile Emergencies
  - Entanglement Emergencies
  - Disorientation Emergencies
  - Wall Breaching
  - Ladder Slide



- 135 minute DVD includes:**
- RIT Positions & Assignments
  - Searching for a Firefighter
  - Securing the RIT Tag Line
  - Converting the SCBA Waist Strap
  - Emergency Air Supply
  - Firefighter Drags
  - Firefighter Rescue Up/Down Stairs
  - Ladder Rescues
  - Rescue from Entanglement
  - Rescue from Breach/Collapse
  - Rescues through the Floor
  - Air Management and RIT
  - Commanding a RIT Operation
  - RIT Benchmarks

**TRAINING DVDS**  
 FDTN's no-nonsense training DVDs are the most comprehensive DVDs available on *Firefighter Survival* and *RIT*. Each DVD provides complete explanations and step-by-step instructions regarding survival skills and RIT operations on the fireground.

**SEND ME THE FOLLOWING FIRENOTES:**

|   |                 |         |
|---|-----------------|---------|
| _____ INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP/Non US                      | \$60.00/120.00  | _____   |
| _____ DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP/Non US                      | \$300.00/420.00 | _____   |
|   | Price           | Members |
| _____ FireNotes – Firefighter Survival                  | \$24.95         | \$19.95 |
| _____ FireNotes – Fireground Size-Up                    | \$24.95         | \$19.95 |
| _____ FireNotes – Firefighter Rescue and RIT            | \$34.95         | \$29.95 |
| _____ FireNotes – Stretching & Operating the First Line | \$24.95         | \$19.95 |
| _____ FireNotes – Thermal Imaging for the Fire Service  | \$24.95         | \$19.95 |
| _____ FireNotes – Fireground Search                     | \$24.95         | \$19.95 |
| _____ Engine Company Operations – Training Drills       | \$99.00         | \$89.00 |
| _____ Truck Company Operations – Training Drills        | \$99.00         | \$89.00 |
| _____ Firefighter Survival – Training Drills            | \$99.00         | \$89.00 |
| _____ Firefighter Rescue & RIT – Training Drills        | \$99.00         | \$89.00 |
| _____ Fireground Strategy & Tactics – Training Drills   | \$99.00         | \$89.00 |
| _____ DVD – Firefighter Survival                        | \$74.95         | \$69.95 |
| _____ DVD – Firefighter Rescue & RIT                    | \$129.95        | \$89.95 |

Handling charges apply to all orders and are \$13.95 (US48) / 28.95 (Foreign/AK/HI). Shipping charges must be added and are: \$3.00 per FireNote, \$9.00 per Training Drill, \$3.00 per DVD, \$9.00 for FireNote Set.

SHIPPING \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rank: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT: TOTAL ENCLOSED:** \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed  
 Credit Card ( MC,  VISA,  AMEX)  
 #: \_\_\_\_\_ CCV \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_  
(3 digit security code)  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**ORDER ONLINE AT WWW.FDTRAINING.COM**

**MAIL APPLICATION TO:**

**Fire Department Training Network**  
P.O. Box 1852  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206

**(317) 862-9679 OFFICE • INFO@FDTRAINING.COM**  
**WWW.FDTRAINING.COM**

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Indianapolis, IN  
Permit No. 2021

**NETWORK APPLICATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP TYPE:** (SEE PAGE 14 FOR DESCRIPTIONS)

Individual (\$60<sup>00</sup>/Yr)  Department (\$300<sup>00</sup>/Yr)

FT 09/24

**PAYMENT**

The Fire Department Training Network, Inc.  
MAIL TO: Fire Department Training Network,  
P.O. Box 1852, Indianapolis, IN 46206  
(317) 862-9679 OFFICE • INFO@FDTRAINING.COM

Bill me  Check enclosed  Department PO

MC/Visa #: \_\_\_\_\_ CCV \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ (CCV # is 3 digit security code on back)

Fire Department Training Network  
P.O. Box 1852  
Indianapolis, IN 46206

**FIREGROUND SEARCH**

by Mike Bricault • Albuquerque Fire Department

**Chapters:**

- Fireground Priorities & Risk versus Benefit
- Search Size-Up: Determining Life Hazards
- Search Tools
- The Search Team
- Search Techniques
- Conducting the Primary & Secondary Search
- Vent-Enter-Search
- Victim Rescue & Removal
- Fireground Search Training Sessions

**FireNotes**

*Fireground Skills – Fireground Language*

**Fireground Search**

**Residential Structures**



**ORDER ONLINE AT WWW.FDTRAINING.COM**