BOX 31-02 ADDRESS OF FIRE

43 WHITE DOGWOOD DR

JULY 31, 2014
Please use the following for educational purposes. This is not a critique of any operations, actions, or any department or individual that was involved in the fire ground operations.

The reason for sharing this incident is to reinforce that even when you are doing things right things can still go bad.

We must not allow ourselves to get complacent.
INITIAL REPORTS FROM YORK COUNTY:
CALLER COULD SEE SMOKE AND FLAMES ON THE FIRST FLOOR
Crews arrived to find light / lazy smoke
CREWS SIZE UP THE FIRE, STRETCH THE INITIAL HANDLINE, AND PREPARE FOR ENTRY

• Middle of the row dwelling

• Light smoke showing from the eves

• Key for residence is in the door, there is car in the driveway, and police are reporting that they can’t account for the occupants

• Neighbors stated that people are in the exposure and that there are dogs in the fire building
ONCE DOOR IS OPEN
FIRST IN CREWS ENCOUNTER FLOOR TO CEILING THICK SMOKE AND HIGH HEAT
JUST PRIOR TO ENTRY, CREWS NOTICED BLISTERED PAINT ON FRONT DOOR
Crews Make Entry

- Firefighter from the truck company opened door
- Lieutenant from the first arriving tanker entered the building with the nozzle followed by the crew from the truck company
NEAR MISS

• As the Lieutenant advanced the handline, the floor gave way and he fell through.

• The Lieutenant was able to spread his arms and catch himself. He only fell to approximately his armpits.

• After the floor collapsed, a large amount of fire encapsulated him.
NEAR MISS

- One firefighter from the truck company was able to pull the Lieutenant up through the hole under the heavy fire conditions.

- Captain from the truck company was able to recover the nozzle and apply water during the brief rescue effort.

- Truck personnel drug the Lieutenant from the fire building and requested EMS to the front.
AFTER THE RESCUE EFFORT

- Crews held fire in check on the first floor from the front door. They were unable to advance any further due to the floor being compromised.
AFTER THE RESCUE EFFORT

- An additional handline was stretched to the charlie side. The second line was advanced through the rear exposed basement to extinguish the remaining fire.
• Fire building and the exposures were searched and all proved negative

• The fire was held to those portions of the structure involved upon fire department arrival

• The residence suffered significant heat and smoke damage throughout
43 WHITE
DOGWOOD DR
BOX 31-02

- The Lieutenant's gear suffered significant heat damage but did not fail
WHY THIS IS A NEAR MISS AND NOT SOMETHING MORE

• Lieutenant suffered NO burns to his body despite thermal damage from direct flame and heat to his gear and SCBA.

• Only injury sustained was a muscular injury to the Lieutenant's leg from the fall.

All of the actions by the Lieutenant and Truck Company were based on instinct and a result of their commitment to training. When things happen we will revert back to our training. The basics matter the most and need to be the focus of our training.
LESSONS LEARNED
LESSONS LEARNED

• Nothing showing from the exterior or light smoke does not mean this is not a significant fire!!! Don’t take any fire for granted, small fires that look simple or “Routine” can go bad quick.

• Always wear your PPE properly. If the Lieutenant and the firefighter had not been dressed properly and appropriately, they could have suffered severe burns or something worse.
LESSONS LEARNED

• Things can and will go bad very early on in an incident. This near miss happened within 2 minutes of the first arriving companies.

• The Rapid Intervention Team is important but needs to be in place early. At the time of the mayday there were only two companies on scene. Initial crews never declared the mayday over the radio because of the time the event occurred and the speed at which was it resolved.
LESSONS LEARNED

• Understanding fire behavior and fire dynamics is vitally important. This fire had significant heat and smoke but was limited by oxygen. Ventilation and door control must be coordinated with fire attack. After the front door was opened, ventilation had begun. Had the neighbors or PD left the door open, the fire would have intensified prior to fire department arrival.

• Adequate staffing on the initial handline and early in a fire can make the difference. If the Lieutenant from the tanker had not waited until crews from the truck company arrived, he would not of had anyone to rescue him.
LESSONS LEARNED

• All firefighters need to learn and practice basic survival skills. The Lieutenant was able to catch himself with his arms and not fall completely through the floor. He remained calm despite conditions and assisted with his rescue.

• A 360 degree size up is important. In this instance, the crews first to the rear encountered the same conditions as seen on the front. There was no evidence of any fire in the basement. However, the best access to obtain final extinguishment was found to be through the exposed basement on side charlie.
Pass it on

STAY SAFE