

## **Falmouth Fire-EMS Operating Guideline**

### **Interior Versus Exterior Operations**

**Objective:** To clarify the various modes of firefighting operations and the respective actions expected of personnel during offensive and defensive modes of operations.

#### **Guidelines:**

##### **A. Interior Attack**

1. Quick, aggressive offensive operations.
2. This mode is the standard, expected firefighting mode in which personnel will initiate an aggressive attack by advancing hose lines inside of the building to the base of the fire. The interior mode will always be in effect unless altered and announced by the incident commander. The interior mode assumes that the fire building is relatively safe, both structurally and from a firefighting or hazardous materials perspective.
3. In all fire incidents in which the operation mode is INTERIOR, the attacking engine company(s) shall attack the fire from the best advantage so as to afford maximum survivability to potential victims and control the fire with maximum effectiveness.
4. The SECOND (2nd) ENGINE COMPANY shall initiate a back-up line of the same size or larger diameter hose in support of the initial attacks lines. PRIMARY SEARCH procedures in the fire building can be a primary responsibility for the systematic search process by the 2<sup>nd</sup> due Engine as well, unless ordered otherwise by the Incident Commander.

##### **B. Exterior Attack**

1. Surround and drown, outside the collapse zone.
2. This mode must be announced by the incident commander and confirmed by responding Companies. The exterior mode will be established when the fire building becomes too dangerous to enter and/or if the fire has advanced beyond the ability of responding companies to effectively control. Once the exterior mode is declared, all companies shall position apparatus and personnel OUTSIDE the collapse zone of the fire building.
3. NOTE: The collapse zone of the building is generally defined as the distance away from the building equal to one and a half times the height of the building, however in very tall buildings (4+ floors) the Officer must judge the relative safe distance and position reasonably. Building corners are generally the safest point of location. The primary tactic during exterior modes will be to protect exposures and then to control/extinguish the fire. During exterior operations, no personnel or

apparatus shall be placed within the collapse zone of the fire building until the relative safety of the building has been assessed and the incident commander has declared the fire building safe for such placement.

4. NOTE: At no time will exterior streams be combined with an interior operation. While interior operations are in progress, no water will be applied from exterior positions.
5. EXCEPTIONS: Exterior streams may be used to control a fire in the area of a building while interior firefighters operate in a separate area of the same building.

These guidelines may be changed or altered by the Fire Chief at any time.