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FIREFIGHTING PROCEDURES

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VACANT BUILDING FIRES

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1. GENERAL

1.1 STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

1.1.1 One objective of the Fire Department is the extinguishment of fires in vacant buildings.

1.1.2 Another is to keep injuries to our members at a minimum while giving due regard to life and extension hazards

At vacant building fires it is often possible to conduct an interior attack for the expeditious extinguishment of the fire and the release of units, but the obligation for this method of attack *is not mandatory* as it is in an occupied building. The officer must consider and weigh the factors that will be enumerated herein, and keep in mind that *life hazard and the safety of the members* involved in the operation is the paramount concern.

1.2 DEFINITION OF VACANT BUILDING

1.2.1 For the purpose of this article, a vacant building is a structure which is considered to be completely unoccupied and all efforts to maintain the building in a livable condition have been abandoned by the owner.

1.3 MARKING OF VACANT BUILDING

1.3.1 As vacant buildings shall be identified and marked to indicate the degree of hazard involved.

In marking vacant buildings, the following symbols shall apply:

VACANT - Normal stability at time of marking



VACANT - Interior hazards exist to such a degree that interior operations may be conducted only after examination, and with extreme caution.



VACANT - Every effort must be made to conduct operations from the exterior. When absolutely necessary to enter the building, adhere to the following:



- A. Approval by officer in command is required.
- B. Examination must be conducted before unit is committed.
- C. Operating force and interior operational time to be kept to a minimum.



- 1.3.2 Such markings should be in lime yellow, reflective type paint.
SQUARE to be approximately 18" x 18".
LINES to be 2" wide
- 1.3.3 Primary markings shall be made alongside the front entrance. If deemed advantageous, additional markings shall be made at other places (fire escape, roof bulkhead, etc.).
- 1.3.4 Markings shall be used only as tentative indicators, as the condition of vacant buildings can alter dramatically due to vandalism, demolition, subsequent fire and water effects, etc.
- 1.3.5 A vacant building does not necessarily mean there is no civilian life hazard. Children, derelicts, trespassers workmen, squatters, etc., may be present.
- 1.3.6 What may appear to be a vacant building could be occupied by one or more families. In many cases this occupancy may not be evident from the front of the building because the apartments in the rear of the building are the ones that are occupied.
- 1.3.7 Indications of tenants in an apparent vacant building:
 - A. Lights in windows of some apartments.
 - B. Curtains, window shades, plants, window gates.
 - C. Electric extension wires strung from utility pole, or through backyard of adjoining building into windows of an apparently vacant building.
 - D. Holes or signs of forced entry in sealed building.
- 1.4 DECISION AS TO METHOD OF ATTACK

Determination of method of attack, exterior or interior, may have to be made by the first arriving officer. As in any fire situation, a size-up must be made.

 - 1.4.1 General considerations:
 - A. Any known or indicated presence of life in the building.
 - B. Location and extent of the fire.
 - C. Exposure problems.
 - D. Number of units responding to initial alarm.

- 1.4.2 Specific considerations pertaining to the building.
- A. Construction, size, and shape of the building.
 - B. Previous occupancy.
 - C. Length of time building has been vacant.
 - D. Access to the building or certain portions of the building from other streets, rear and court yards, fire escapes, adjoining buildings, and exterior stairs.
 - E. Location problems: street access and width, parked car problems, water supply, location of hydrants, local topography
 - F. Number of, location of, and severity of previous fires. Structural damage and openings in floors, walls, and roof.
 - G. Structural stability of the building:
 - 1. Sections of floors, roofs, partitions, and interior walls and stairs burned away or missing.
 - 2. Cracked or out of line exterior walls, indicated by bowing or bulging of the wall, out of line window frames, cracked lintels, missing or loose bricks.
 - 3. Sagging floors evidenced by out of line door or window frames, diagonal cracks in plaster walls, cracks between wall and ceiling plaster, evidence of beams pulling away from bearing walls, a bow in the ceiling
 - H. Abandoned materials or accumulated rubbish in building. Special attention must be given to any porous materials that may have absorbed large amounts of water from previous fires and/or exposure to the weather.
- 1.4.3 The decision as to method of attack must be made by the officer in command after a careful evaluation of all of the aforementioned factors. Dependent on the location, extent and accessibility of the fire in the building. Many of these fires are extinguished via interior attack.

1.5 PRIMARY HAZARD CONSIDERATIONS

Vacant buildings have all the construction defects and potential for fire spread that they possessed when occupied. In addition, hazards above the normal have developed as a result of deterioration caused by misuse, vandalism and previous fires.

- 1.5.1 The personal injury hazard to firefighters is of paramount importance. Items to be considered are entrapment by rapid fire spread, falls, falling objects and partial and complete structural collapse.

- 1.5.2 Vacant building fires do not "just happen." They are caused by one or more individuals who have no regard for the safety of the firefighter. Indeed, vacant buildings have been "Booby Trapped" deliberately to injure or kill the unwary in the following ways:
- A. Diesel fuel spread on all floors of the building. A small initial fire may spread rapidly throughout, trapping members therein. Fires in vapors of diesel fuel oil develop slowly at the start, but progress rapidly as vapor production intensifies. Heat developed will be for a longer duration than that involving gasoline, igniting more of the combustible materials in the area, and producing a fire of rapid spread and greater magnitude.
 - B. Fires ignited below the operating forces, using delayed ignition devices.
 - C. Small containers of gasoline or accelerant strung or placed in overhead areas, dropping into the fire as members are advancing. Gasoline vapors, immediately upon ignition, burn with lightning rapidity with high heat production. Exposed combustible material in the flash area will be ignited.
 - D. Refrigerators positioned so that they will fall on members entering the fire area.
 - E. Heavy furniture used to block access to an apartment, forcing members crawl to over or around obstructions. This also creates an inherent delay in any emergency evacuation of the fire area.
 - F. Stairs removed or broken. Caution must be exercised when stairs have marble treads and half landings (usual in New Law Tenement) that are cracked or broken. Landings are supported by 3/4" angle iron at the edges which may have deteriorated due to age and lack of maintenance. Steps or landings may collapse under a member's weight, with member falling through to floor or floors below.
 - G. Bolts on fire escape treads loosened or removed so that a member's weight will cause them to pivot or give way.
 - H. Holes in floor or roof covered over with cardboard or linoleum, collapsing under a member's weight.
 - I. All members responding to vacant building fires, (especially roofmen and outside vent men) are cautioned to note the method used to seal these buildings in their sizeup. Access may be gained via the roof or upper floors only to find no means of escape from the lower floors.

Units with vacant buildings in their districts should survey their districts for the presence of the newly sealed buildings. If any are found, all units assigned on the first alarm should be notified. Consider entering this information into the CIDS program.

2. OPERATIONAL PLANS AND STRATEGY

2.1 TYPES OF FIRES TO BE EXPECTED

2.1.1 Vacant building fires pose a threat to life and property and are, in incidence and cost, an increasing problem. Most are of suspicious or incendiary origin. They are set with ingenuity and in fiendish variety. Rapid fire spread and heavy involvement of the structure may be the result of the following:

- A. Fires set in the rear of buildings, negating placement of tower ladder (TL) for stream operation.
- B. Accelerants spread over several floors, ignited on lowest floor. This creates a large volume/area fire within a short time.
- C. Separate fires set in the building, one on a lower floor using diesel fuel as an accelerant, another on the top floor primed with gasoline. Such fires, when set in the center or rear of the building, may prevent the use of exterior streams, Fire on top floor will be evident on arrival and likely to attract initial attack. While operations are taking place on top floor, fire on lower floor will flare up suddenly, endangering personnel above.
- D. Where there is a row of vacant buildings, fires set in alternate buildings, can spread to exposures via common shafts. Such fires might extend to involve three or four buildings, merge into a common fire body, and severely expose nearby occupied structures.
- E. Tubs in bathrooms on each floor removed by cutting floor beams and dropping them to first floor. Removal of all piping, toilet bowls, and sinks by vandals, creates an open shaft contributing to rapid fire spread from cellar to top floor. Secondary effect of this practice, but equally as hazardous to the operating force, is that the floors have been dangerously weakened in each of these areas on every story.
- F. Large accumulations of discarded furniture and other rubbish, properly positioned and sprinkled with accelerant, will create a rapid and extensive spread of fire.
- G. Fires in vacant buildings will normally have a rapid spread due to the many exterior and interior openings, i.e., windows removed, holes in floors, roofs and walls. Drafts of air create a ready supply of oxygen to the fire.

2.2 Proper size-up is most important for the officer in command. In execution of the fire attack plan, the same order of priorities apply as in fire fighting in occupied buildings, i.e., life, exposures, confinement and extinguishment.

- 2.2.1 The structural stability of the vacant building or parts of the building will be the most important aspect determining the initial attack strategy i.e., interior or exterior. Since vacant buildings possess inherent features conducive to rapid fire spread, both vertically and horizontally, possible collapse, and extension to exposures, the quick application of water is necessary for timely control and extinguishment. The rapid spread of an uncontrolled fire from a room, to the apartment, to an entire building is very evident in vacant building fires.
- 2.2.2 All sectors of a fire area must be surveyed and assessed in relation to the total fire situation. The officer in command must take into account the six sides of the fire, via., four sides at the same level, as well as above and below.
- 2.2.3 Protection of life is the most important consideration in size-up. This means placing the first stream between the fire and persons endangered.
- A. When a vacant building is heavily involved on arrival, place hose streams between the involved building and the most severe LIFE EXPOSURE. Assume an unoccupied factory severely exposed by a fully involved vacant building, and the same fire communicating to an occupied dwelling. The first stream would be placed in position to protect the people in the multiple dwelling, even though the factory is the most severely exposed of the two. The factory is the **Most Severely Exposed Building**, but, because of life hazard, the multiple dwelling is the **Most Severe Life Exposure** and the exposure which must be protected first.
- B. When no life is endangered in the exposures, position the first stream to protect the greatest amount of property. Assume a fire exposing a stack of waste lumber, and communicating at the same time but not quite as severely to an oil storage yard. In this case, the stream should protect the oil storage yard. Even though it is not the most severely exposed to fire, it is the **Exposure to be Given Greatest Consideration**.
- C. When possible, take a position which not only protects the exposure, but also enables the stream to be used on the main body of fire. In cases where it is impossible to so confine the fire, alternate the stream from fire to exposure. This procedure controls the effects and reduces the cause of spread of fire.

- D. A fire may involve two or more floors in a certain portion of a building, such as the rear or a wing of an "H" "U" or "E" type building.
 - 1. An interior attack may be feasible (within safety limitations) to extinguish or hold the fire in that area while exterior streams are set up. Hose lines can be stretched via fire escapes, portable ladders, through adjoining buildings, tower ladder bucket, etc. Positions above a fire that have not been controlled are very hazardous, particularly in vacant building fires where the spread of fire can be unusually rapid.
 - 2. Units operating above any fire must be continuously aware of conditions below them. Units on floors below must inform those working above of any developing conditions that will affect their positions.
- 2.2.4 Where the fire is not within reach of outside streams, evaluation and appropriate decision must be made by the officer in command.
- 2.2.5 Where the area of building involved in the fire has been accessible to street streams, a TL and associated engine company personnel may be utilized to perform most of the overhauling. One 1 3/4" line, with the minimum necessary engine and ladder company personnel, may enter the building from the bucket accomplishing final extinguishment, floor by floor. While this will be time consuming and does not completely preclude injuries, it will reduce the number of personnel exposed at any one time.
 - A. Limited application of interior streams is advisable when penetration of outside streams is restricted to the front two rooms of a building. Of course, complete control from the exterior might be possible if open areas are available at exposure 2, 3 and 4 sides, as needed. Use of the Satellite monitor at high pressure is an option, but this might destroy the main structural components of the building.
 - B. In large area vacant buildings, e.g., New Law Tenements, there are occasions where it might be preferable (within limitations of safety) to send in two interior lines for prompt extinguishment. This procedure will limit extension, minimize damage to occupied exposures, and increase the availability of units. The alternative is stretching lines up fire escapes and into exposures to operate across courts and shafts. This might require a second alarm assignment. The primary guide should be to expose as few men as possible, using as few lines as possible within the fire building

2.2.6 Precautions during interior operations:

Before any interior operation is initiated, two points are paramount.

- A. Members must psychologically adjust to a "no rush" approach. In these buildings, the life hazard is to the firefighter. A slower, more cautious operation is definitely indicated.
- B. More time than usual must be devoted to physical size-up of the building.
 - 1. Vacant building markings:
Members are so used to looking at these markings, they often do not react to them. They provide important tips pertaining to interior conditions. If a roof has been previously opened or burned away, to the degree that the need for future vertical ventilation appears minimal, the letters "R.O." (roof open) can be made over the building condition marking.
 - 2. Indications of previous fire(s): burned out window frames and overhauling debris from previous operations
 - 3. Mattresses piled around first floor landing area may indicate that landings on upper floors have been removed. Heavy salvageable items are often dropped from upper floors by building strippers.
 - 4. Bathroom floors and beams are often removed to facilitate dropping toilet bowls and tubs to lower floors.
 - 5. Doors are often missing from apartments allowing rapid spread of fire and smoke up interior halls.
 - 6. Ceiling and floor beams have often been weakened or burned through during previous fires
 - 7. Exterior openings may be sealed with cement blocks or covered with tin. Fire can burn for considerable time and be extensive before being detected. Access and ventilation will be very difficult.

3. ENGINE COMPANY OPERATIONS

Since the strategy of vacant building fire fighting is based on timely and safe control of the situation, the initial tactics of implementation are chiefly engine company operations. In this regard, supply to, and placement of, apparatus is of critical importance.

- 3.1 Because of the conditions in a vacant building conducive to rapid fire build-up, quick water on the fire is a prime requisite to effect reasonable control. For attainment of this objective, deployment of the first engine company to arrive is most important.

- 3.1.1 In-Line Pumping (ILP) may be a tactic considered. The decision to utilize the New Yorker Multiversal Nozzle (exterior) or to initiate an interior attack is based on officer's size-up of the situation
- A. The engine company officer using ILP must transmit the signal via department radio for the information of other arriving engine companies. This is to alert them to the fact that they should be prepared to augment the water supply of the initial company.
 - B. Advantages of In-Line Pumping
 1. Fast water on the fire.
 2. Pumper in position for exterior stream operation.
 3. Equipment on a pumper closer to the fire.
 4. Shorter and faster hand line stretches.
 5. Lower engine pressures required.
 6. Engine company chauffeur (ECC) in better position to observe operations and assist if necessary.
 - C. Disadvantages of In-Line Pumping
 1. Water supply limited to supply line layout and hydrant supply potential.
 2. It may not be possible to attain full pumper capacity
 3. Possibility of pumper blocking out aerial and tower ladder apparatus.
 4. If hydrant selected is OOS the pumper may not be able to proceed to next available hydrant, having been blocked out by later arriving apparatus
 5. Possible damage to apparatus by falling debris.
- 3.1.2 If a backstretch (laying hose line from fire to hydrant) is to be made, and it is evident that more than one line will be needed on the fire, the officer shall order a second line to be dropped in front of the fire building before the pumper proceeds to the hydrant. This line will be stretched and operated by the second arriving engine company.
- 3.1.3 When supplying aerial or TL pipes, the largest diameter hose shall be used. Control of the water shall be at the pumper(s) supplying the unit.
- 3.1.4 Interior operations should be predicated on existing and developing conditions. Advancement of lines should be deliberate and with due attention to safety. Units must avoid the passing of any fire that may burn members or become a later threat. All members must be constantly aware of conditions in surrounding areas.

- 3.1.5 Use extreme caution when operating lines above fire. Be aware of conditions in surrounding areas, especially in the area below. Officers shall monitor radios for messages and conditions being reported throughout the building.
- 3.1.6 Usually only the officer and two members are needed for advancing the line into the immediate fire area. Other members should remain outside, readily available for relief or any immediate assistance required.
- 3.1.7 When stretching hose lines, try to avoid kinking of the line. Also check for kinking after the line has been stretched or is being advanced. This is particularly important when utilizing the 1 3/4" line equipped with the FT-2 Constant Pressure Nozzle. Kinking will cause a loss in available water at the nozzle. While the stream may appear to be adequate, the actual available gpm for fire fighting purposes may prove to be insufficient.
- 3.1.8 When stretching hand lines into exposures for operations into the fire building, 2 1/2" lines with solid stream nozzles should be considered. The additional gpm and available reach of the larger line may prove to be a considerable overall advantage.
- 3.1.9 When not first to arrive, ECC should position apparatus at hydrants and test them. They should listen to Handie-Talkie instructions for the deployment of their apparatus or to assist other operations.
- 3.1.10 If the first arriving ECC encounters any hydrant problems, he should notify the officer of his unit. The second arriving engine company should also be apprised of this fact so that appropriate measures can be taken to insure sufficient water supply at the fire.
- 3.1.11 Satellite units can deliver large amounts of water through the 4 1/2" hose to their manifold which can be positioned close to the fire operation. Other water supply appliances that are available in some areas are the Maverick Hydrant and the Mini-manifold.

4. LADDER COMPANY OPERATIONS

- 4.1 Ladder company operations are generally devoted to facilitating the engine company efforts in getting water on the fire. If an interior operation is absolutely necessary due to the fire location, it follows standard operational procedures within the bounds of safety determined by the condition of the building.
 - 4.1.1 The ladder company officer should be aware of the emphasis on exterior operations whenever possible. He should be prepared to position apparatus and operate elevated streams on command.

- A. The main objective in the placement of exterior streams is to obtain the greatest coverage, while bearing in mind the safety of members involved. Tower Ladders should be positioned to cover two sides of a building. Placement of TL in a vacant lot at times may be both possible and necessary for utmost coverage. The lot must be surveyed by the officer and chauffeur to determine the condition of the rubble and whether it will support the weight of the apparatus.

Previous knowledge of the condition of the lot will be an aid in this determination. Shoring will be necessary under the jacks and tormentors for greater stability of the apparatus. The boom should not be operated at right angles to the chassis at low elevations. It should be operated at narrow angles, over the front or rear of the apparatus. At times, only a portion of the TL may have to be placed in the lot to obtain the desired coverage.

- B. In vacant building areas, many TL carry their own 3 1/2 " hose (4 or 5 lengths on the side of the apparatus) which can be stretched by the apparatus as it proceeds into position.

4.2 If there is a possibility of occupants, efforts must be made to effect their removal.

4.2.1 Since vacant buildings have low victim potential, they should be searched within the limits of safety after building conditions have been evaluated and the fire has been largely extinguished.

4.3 If exterior operations are not evident on arrival, survey building for feasibility of interior operations, taking into consideration all the factors enumerated in Sections 1.4.1 and 1.4.2.

4.4 If interior operations are conducted, search immediate areas for any occupants, examine for fire extension, and any dangerous conditions throughout building.

4.5 If a member is equipped with a radio, he must be listening for any messages that will affect the operations. He must also communicate any conditions that are dangerous or potentially hazardous.

4.6 Members operating on the roof must be aware of emergency means for withdrawing from their position should conditions warrant it. One member with a radio must be listening for any messages or conditions that may affect roof operations. He should be monitoring conditions on the roof, in the building, and in the exposures. If power saws are being used, this member must be in a quiet area for effective monitoring of and transmission of messages.

4.7 Search, examination and overhauling should be conducted within the limits of safety and only as absolutely necessary.

4.8 Continuously monitor the building for structural stability.

4.9 Check exposures and operate therein when needed.

4.10 Provide illumination as necessary.

4.11 When ladder company duties are not otherwise required, assist in the stretching of lines.

5. SAFETY

5.1 At all times, operations are to be disciplined with an emphasis on the safety of the operating forces.

5.1.1 Carefully evaluate the situation.

5.1.2 Use a strategy that will provide rapid control with the least overall hazard to our personnel.

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- 5.1.3 In many vacant building fires, the basic concept of the interior attack is not applicable, and should not be employed.
- 5.2 During interior operations, masks must be carried by all members and used when necessary. When operating with masks, it must be remembered that ambient temperatures may not be evident, visibility and communications will be hindered.
- 5.3 Companies operating alone in vacant buildings, particularly must be wary of possible booby trapping. All floors below the fire area must be examined for incendiary devices. (See Section 1.5.2).
- 5.4 Be aware of odors of gasoline or the presence of heavy black smoke, indicating a petroleum base fuel or accelerant.
- 5.5 Two members should be assigned to search all floors below the operating force for the presence of other fires or conditions not yet detected. One of these members shall be equipped with a Handie-Talkie radio.
- 5.6 Check the ceilings in the apartment below the fire, to alert members above of holes in the path of their advance.
- 5.7 Similarly, the company operating in the fire apartment should warn other members of holes in the floor above the fire.
- 5.8 If there is no door on the fire apartment and fire is lapping into the hall, remove a door from another apartment. Position it so as to limit fire extension into upper areas, limiting build-up of smoke, heat, etc. This technique should get priority consideration in the "partial vacant" where the integrity of the public hall is necessary for removal of occupants.
- 5.9 Ladder company members should be particularly careful in searching above the fire. Use masks, vent windows as you go, move slowly feeling for holes in the floor, etc. If you cannot see the floor, you should be feeling your way, utilizing a tool, or else you should be moving on your hands and knees.
- 5.10 Ladder members operating on the exterior should communicate indications of previous fires, particularly if they were on, the floor above or below the present operations.
- 5.11 Ladder members should be conscious of the condition of fire escapes and gooseneck ladders. Previous fire or overhauling may have loosened supports, etc.
- 5.12 Generally, there is no need for VES from the fire escape, since we are not looking for trapped or overcome occupants. If member does make such an entry, be careful of holes in the floor immediately under the window. Communicate with your officer any time such entry is made.
- 5.13 If there has been a previous fire in the building, particularly on upper floors, assume there are holes in the roof. If there is any question as to the stability of the roof, do not go out on it. Communicate this information to your officer.
- 5.14 Members going out on the roof via interior stairs must be aware that trench cuts are often made around bulkhead areas. Be extremely careful not to step into, or on top of, a previously cut roof section.
- 5.15 When the roof has been cut, before leaving the scene, spray paint "R.O." (roof open) on both the inside and outside of the bulkhead as well as above the hazard marking on front of the building.
- 5.16 To facilitate future operations, bulkhead doors, skylights, scuttle covers, etc., can be removed. Other vertical ventilation operations should be considered, to cut down on future roof man requirements.
- 5.17 Holes in roof may be covered with bedsprings, if available. This will prevent members from falling into holes, while affording adequate ventilation.

- 5.18 The floor below the fire is not a safe area in a weakened structure during a TL operation. All members should be outside the building.
- 5.19 The operating perimeter should be mobile and operating points established with attention to the potential for structural collapse. ALL members should be aware of the signs of collapse. Any indication should be relayed immediately to the officer in command, for evaluation. When collapse is possible, no member or apparatus should be permitted within the anticipated endangered area. Past experience with exterior wall collapse at vacant buildings has been to have the walls collapse intact, rather than crumble. Walls have fallen greater distances than anticipated, sometimes as much as 50 feet from the base.

5.20 During exterior stream operations, monitor water run-off. Be aware that a TL may be putting water into the building at the rate of six tons per minute. Allow time for the water to run off before entering the building. Utilize the TL bucket, make a visual examination of all floors for heavy accumulations of water. Breaking toilet bowls or soil pipes at floor level, removing blocks from dumbwaiter shafts at floor level, will hasten run-off, directing the water into safe channels.

5.21 A full length of hose carried by engine companies, and connected directly to the TL pipe and operated from the basket. Members may enter rooms for extinguishing or overhauling, by-passing weakened stairs or fire escapes. This added mobility of the stream is of particular use for fires inside rooms, cornices, etc., or otherwise beyond the lateral sweep of the TL pipe. It often eliminates the need for repositioning the TL apparatus, but consideration should be given to the fact that this operation will restrict other utilization of the TL.

Note: Members are reminded that the 10 ft. length of hose previously used from the TL basket was found to be unsafe and consequently removed from service.

6. TRAINING

6.1 Fires in vacant buildings provide the Department with the means and facilities for the training of members in actual fire conditions. Members must be closely supervised, and training conducted by all officers.

6.2 The opportunity to try innovations, tools and equipment at these fires should be utilized for finding more efficient and safer methods of operation.

6.3 Drills must be conducted in fighting this type of fire, both theoretical and practical, for the training of all members.

6.4 Frequent review of our strategies should be conducted to analyze and improve operations.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The Fire Department is charged with the protection of life and property from the ravages of fire. However, as has been emphasized, the life hazard at vacant building fires is almost solely that of our operating members. The fact that some interior operation may be needed is the reason considerable detail has been taken as it pertains to the safety of our members operating in, and around, the building. Nevertheless, it must be stressed, *The Primary Emphasis in Vacant Building Operations is That of EXTERIOR ATTACK.*

BY ORDER OF THE FIRE COMMISSIONER AND THE CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT