



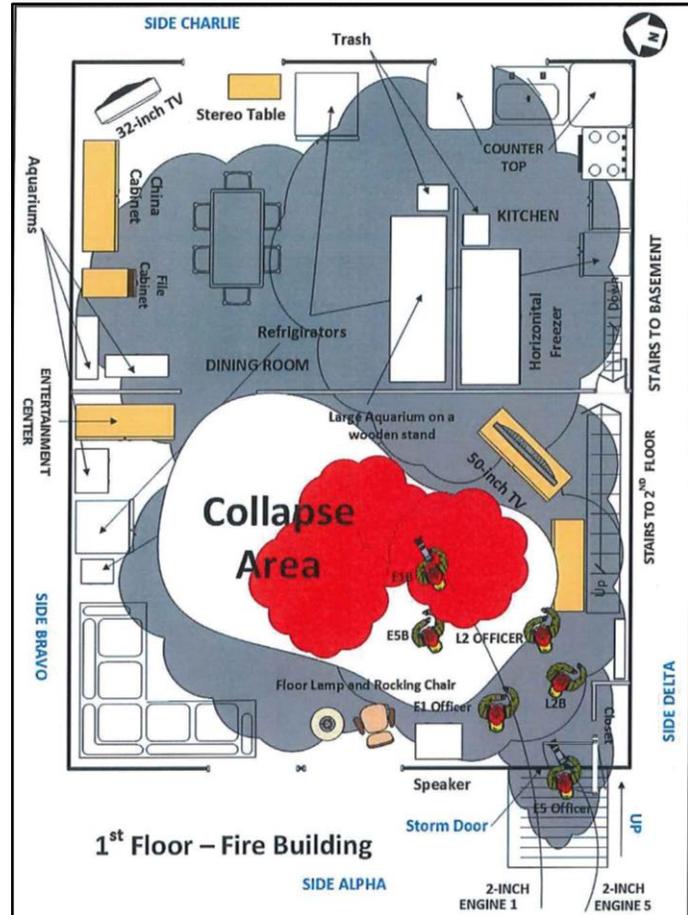
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NIOSH FF Fatality Report 2016-18

On September 24, 2016, Captain Chris Leach (Ladder 2) and Lieutenant Jerry Fickes (Squad 4), died in the Line of Duty due to a floor collapse and exposure to fire in the basement of a row house. A third firefighter, Lieutenant Ardythe Hope (Engine 5) died on December 1, 2016 due to injuries sustained at the fire. Four other firefighters were also injured during fireground operations.

At 0256 hours companies were dispatched to a report of a residential structure fire with persons trapped. The building was a Type III/Ordinary construction two-story with a walkout basement. Ladder 2 arrived on scene at 0301 and reported heavy fire showing from the rear (Division C) of the structure. Multiple crews entered the first floor in Division A to begin fire attack. At approximately 0309 (**8 minutes after arrival on scene**) there was a collapse of the first floor and 3 Firefighters fell into the basement. A MAYDAY was transmitted at 0310.

Crews worked in heavy smoke, heat and debris conditions to find and remove the firefighters. ***Fire attack in Division C did not begin until after 21 minutes (0317). A second collapse of the first floor occurred at approximately 0320 hours.*** Lt. Fickes was removed at 0329, followed by Lt. Hope at 0348 and Captain Leach at 0430 hours.



Contributing Factors

- Sliding glass door open on Division C
- Lack of an established and continuous water supply
- Lack of size-up and risk assessment
- Lack of incident management and command safety
- Lack of command safety role
- Lack of an Incident Action Plan
- Inappropriate fireground tactics
- Lack of company/crew integrity
- Lack of a personnel accountability system
- Lack of a Rapid Intervention Crew
- Ineffective fireground communications
- Lack of continuous professional development

Read the entire report at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/pdfs/face201618.pdf>