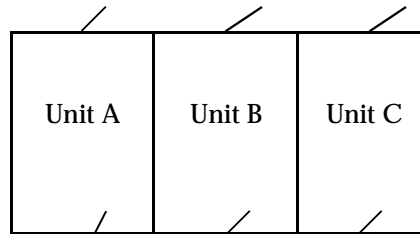


Commercial Strip Store Fire



Label the Sectors



Discussion

Commercial fire buildings pose many of the same problems that non-fireproof multiple dwellings do. Vincent Dunn has said that commercials have large areas, common cocklofts over the entire building, and many void spaces that fire can travel through. Fire loads will vary in commercials depending on the occupancy use but typically, they will require the use of larger handlines in most fire operations.

Operations in commercial buildings will require a proper size-up, a good job positioning apparatus and rapid decision making in the determination of where to make the fire attack. One difference in these buildings when comparing them to others is that most of the time, they will have low occupancy levels, especially after business hours. A good pre-plan will determine some of these factors. Additionally, these buildings may have installed detection or suppression systems that may provide us with an advantage.

Ventilation must take place early and often using horizontal, vertical and forced ventilation. The RIT will also have to determine where the crews will be working and how they will escape or how RIT will enter in that area. Estimating of hose stretches is also a challenge, always plan for more hose than needed.

General Considerations

- Always check void spaces before entry into each occupancy and area of a commercial bldg.
- Pay attention to loading of the roof with HVAC equipment
- Watch out for long spans, remember that some type of truss is holding it up
- Use a larger line, most of the time it is needed
- Ground ladders are faster than aerials, but they compliment each other well
 - Provide back-up to the initial attack
- Check the exposures quickly, ventilation may have to take place over the exposure also
- Keep Your Crew Together—REPORT YOUR FINDINGS

Discussion Questions

Review your department procedure for commercial attack

1. Where would your first-in engine and first-in truck be positioned at this building?
2. What are the water supply options available to you?
3. Describe your size-up of this building. What factors are you trying to determine?
4. What is the tool assignment for each company arriving at this incident?
5. How and where would a thermal imaging camera help you in a fire at this type of incident? Who would carry it?
6. Where would you ventilate this structure from? What types of tools may be necessary?
7. Identify areas where fire may travel through void spaces.
8. If this building is 100' x 40' x 15', what is the critical flow for:
 - a. 50% of the building involved
 - b. 100% of the building involved
9. Describe how a defensive operation would differ from offensive operations.