

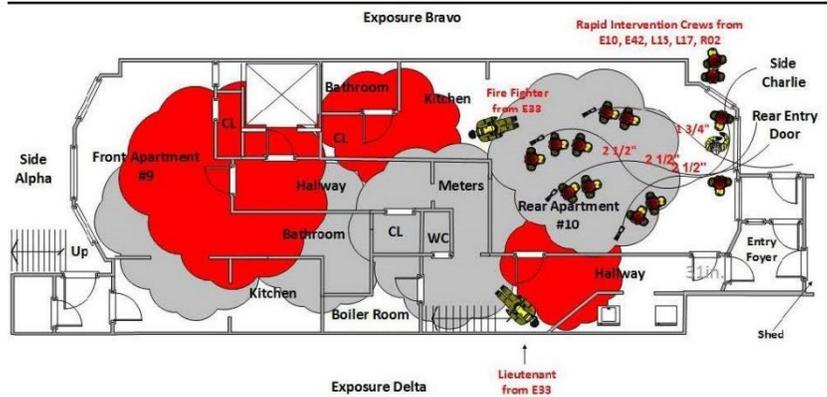


NIOSH FF Fatality Report 2014-09

On March 26, 2014, Lt. Edward J. Walsh (43) and Firefighter Michael Kennedy (33) of the Boston Fire Department died in the line of duty in an occupied multifamily residential building.

At 1442 hours companies were dispatched for a reported structure fire. Engine 33, with both Lt. Walsh and FF Kennedy, arrived on scene at 1445 and reported “a four-story with smoke showing from the first floor”. E33 stretched an uncharged 1 ¾” hoseline up the front steps, through the front door, and into the front hallway. They were then advised of fire and a possible victim in the basement and took the hoseline down the steps. The E33 pump operator charged the hoseline, but the hoseline lost its water due to the **rapidly deteriorating fire conditions**. Other arriving companies stretched additional hoselines to backup and protect E33 but conditions became untenable.

Open doors created an unrestricted flow path from the basement to the first floor and floors above, triggering a rapid progression of fire conditions. This trapped Lt. Walsh and FF Kennedy in the basement. The fire, heat, and smoke throughout the basement and first floor created untenable conditions on both floors. An evacuation of the building was ordered and approximately one minute later Lt. Walsh called Command and advised they were running out of water. Command requested a 2nd alarm. Several companies attempted to enter the building but were pushed back by heavy fire and smoke. Crews were able to advance a 2 ½” hoseline into the basement apartment on Side C. Approximately 15 minutes later, crews located FF Kennedy in the kitchen area of this apartment. Conditions got worse and the structure became fully involved. Once the fire was completely knocked down, Lt. Walsh was found at the bottom of the stairs near the entrance to Apartment #10 in the basement.



Key Contributing Factors

- Delayed notification to the fire department
- Uncontrolled ventilation by a civilian
- Occupied residential building with immediate life safety concerns
- Staffing
- Scene size-up
- Lack of fire hydrants on Side C (a private street)
- Lack of training regarding wind-driven fires
- Unrestricted flow path of the fire
- Lack of fire sprinkler system

Read the entire report at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/pdfs/face201409.pdf>