



## 293 South Main Street Structure Fire

At 20:31 hrs on Sunday, August 16, 2009 the Mechanicville Fire Department responded to a reported structure fire at 293 South Main Street. Upon arriving, Car 39 confirmed a working fire in the attic of a large 2.5 story balloon-frame occupancy.

Within a minute of Car 39's arrival, ETA 44-1 arrived with a crew of 6 interior firefighters. With heavy fire venting from the front attic window, a second alarm assignment was transmitted bringing a FAST Team from Clifton Park, an Engine Rescue from Hemstreet Park and the John Ahearn Rescue Squad to the scene. Additionally, an Engine Rescue from Hillcrest responded to the Central Station for cover assignment.

The crew of 44-1 quickly stretched a 1 3/4" handline to the second floor. A primary search of the second floor was quickly completed and with no signs of smoke or fire, firefighter continued to the attic. Due to the attic door being locked, firefighters had to utilize hand tools to force open the attic door. The crew encountered heavy fire conditions at the top of the attic stairway and initiated an aggressive interior attack. A second line was quickly requested and put into operation.

Fortunately there was a fire hydrant across the street and a 5" supply line was quickly established to ETA 44-1. With the arrival of Tower 39-1, roof ventilation began. Due to the old style construction of the home, the slate and heavy timbers slowed the ventilation process. Nevertheless, the crew of T 39-1 was able to complete the job.

Crews made quick work of the fire, extinguishing the bulk of it within the first 5 minutes of arrival. Crews remained on scene for another hour or two for overhaul. The Mechanicville Fire Department was assisted on scene by the Mechanicville Police and the Saratoga County Cause and Origin Team for fire investigation. At the time of the fire there was severe weather in the area and it was determined that the fire was caused by a lightning strike.

All residents were accounted for and no injuries were reported.

## Knickerbocker Rd. Structure Fire

On August 28, 2009, shortly before 2am, Mechanicville Fire was dispatched to a reported structure fire on Knickerbocker Rd. in Hemstreet Park. ETA 44-1 responded and while en-route a second ETA from Mechanicville was requested to the scene.

Hemstreet Park ER 14 laid 4 inch up the long driveway to the fire building and upon arrival, 44-1 connected to the 4" and laid a 5" supply line approximately 600' down the road to draft out of a nearby pond.

ETA 42-1 was sent up the driveway to supply ER 14 until the water supply was established. Manpower from both 44-1 and 42-1 was sent up to the fire building where they utilized 1 3/4" and 2 1/2" handlines to knock down the fire.

Prior to their arrival, the buildings roof had collapsed down onto the second floor ceiling and two large exterior propane tanks had blown their pressure reliefs and were burning off.

Crews attempted an interior attack but due to concerns over the integrity of the structure, crews were forced to continue with exterior operations.

After utilizing ground ladders to extinguish the fire above the second floor, crews regrouped and initiated interior operations for overhaul. Due to the poor condition of the structure, overhaul was slow going.

Mechanicville personnel assisted with pickup and were clear of the scene by 0600 hrs. One firefighter received minor injuries but was treated on scene and released.

## County Route 76 Structure Fire

On September 6, 2009 the Mechanicville Fire Department responded to 96 County Route 76 in Stillwater to assist the Arvin Hart Fire Department at the scene of a working structure fire in a single wide, vacant mobile home. Arvin Hart command requested 2 ETA's with manpower to the scene.

ETA 42-1 and 44-1 responded with 6 interior personnel on each vehicle as well as Cars 39, 39-0 and 39-9. Arvin Hart crews had the fire out prior to MFD arrival. MFD personnel assisted with overhaul and pick-up. Crews were on scene for less than 30 minutes. No injuries were reported.



## Day Time Mutual Aid with Arvin Hart Changes

Arvin Hart's Chief has advised us that from this point forward, if we are activated during the daytime for mutual aid to Arvin Hart, we are to respond with T39-1 unless command specifically requests anything other. Now that we will be responding with T39-1, please ensure that all members on board are prepared to perform truck company functions (ventilation, entry and search). Unless otherwise directed by command, while in the function of a truck company team, we will not be running water or using attack lines, we will be performing truck duties. If forced to go defensive, please be familiar with the use of T39-1 as an elevated master stream device because it will definitely be utilized for that purpose.

As with any other apparatus responding for mutual aid, the crew requirements shall be the following:

Mutual Aid Calls: Minimum 4 person crew for all apparatus responding to mutual aid calls:

- 1 Qualified Driver
- 1 Officer (Class A and should be a Chief, Captain or Lieutenant)
- 2 Class A Firefighters

Note: If possible, respond with a crew of 8. Apparatus should attempt to respond to Mutual Aid calls with a Captain or Lieutenant on the vehicle whenever possible.

As explained above, our goal is to provide a full crew of hard working personnel prepared to perform truck company work such as ventilation, search and forcible entry. Only when requested by command will our personnel perform fire suppression duties. When possible, the apparatus should attempt to respond with a full crew of 8 qualified firefighters.

If you have any questions regarding this change, please contact a Chief Line Officer.

### **MFD September 2009 Training Article Aerial Truck Placement and Truck Company Functions By: Tom Brennan**

#### **Aerial Placement**

Whenever roundtable discussions center on "truck work," a repeated concern for aerial apparatus placement never fails to pop up. The first concern begins with planning response. The aerial apparatus should never be the third or later piece of equipment to enter the fire block or other location. If the aerial apparatus is too far from the fire building to be used, you might have saved tax dollars and come by bus. Another rule for aerial chauffeurs to follow is to slow down—before the fire scene or intersection. Remember, backing out of an incorrect, speedy turn may be next to impossible and certainly adds to the confusion, delay, and our on-scene injury records. This is the time you must have to assess the fire location, the life hazard, physical surroundings, hydrant locations, and hose-line locations before placement of the apparatus. This slow-down effort will also reduce the probability of tunnel vision that causes us to hit parked automobiles, members, and civilians, or park on advancing hoselines. The extra seconds taken here will reduce the additional minutes needed later to reposition a hastily stopped truck.

You must also have two-way communication, based on pre-plan, with the responding engine company. They cannot stop; take a hydrant before the fire and block the street with you behind them. Other guidelines depend on the aerial chauffeur knowing where his centerline of the turntable is—from the chauffeur's seat. This can only be done with practice and cooperation. It is an individual, line-of-sight trick that must be learned by each chauffeur personally. You should be able to mentally line up three objects—in the cab, on the apparatus, and in the surrounding background—that will assure proper turntable position the first time. While you are gaining this talent, other firefighters should assist in lining up the turntable at the objective. If in doubt, get help.

Position of the aerial is mandated naturally, by the visible or suspected life hazard and the location of the fire. If there is only one victim, then the turntable should usually be positioned perpendicular to him. If there is more than one, the position chosen should be able to secure both victims without moving the apparatus. This position is usually central between or among those most severely exposed. If there is no apparent (visible) life hazard, then the center of the fire structure is the position to take. At single-story strip stores (taxpayers), it's best to position an aerial platform directly in front of (but set back from) the fire building for possible use of an aggressive, large-caliber stream should initial interior efforts prove futile. At private dwellings (more than one story), the corner, preferably opposite an attached garage, is good, routine placement. This gives external access to all of the front bedrooms, the side rear bedroom, and the roof. The front rear bedrooms adjacent to the garage are readily accessible from its roof by portable ladder.



**MFD September 2009 Training Article**  
**Aerial Truck Placement and Truck Company Functions**  
**Tom Brennan**

**Truck Company Functions**

One of the reasons we are unable to make advances in manning levels within the paid sector is that the budgeter has little or no understanding of the value of the functions performed on the fireground. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the sometimes criminal manning levels of our aerial devices. In many cases, aerial devices are no more than an expensive way to transport personnel from the station to the fire scene to man more hoselines. Whose fault is it? Many times, we are unable to communicate to those responsible for providing funding the many functions, duties, and responsibilities that must be in place to support actual extinguishment. The relatively simple process of driving the ladder truck to the scene does not provide the firefighters to perform extinguishment support services (TRUCK WORK) effectively and safely. Therefore, from time to time on this page I'd like to share comments on the duties, functions, and responsibilities of those assigned to ladder companies.

I was once asked what I thought was the difference between engine and truck operations. I answered that engine work was certainly more rewarding on a regular basis, that putting the wet stuff on the red stuff was more fun, and that the only thing the chief wanted to know from his engine officer was the progress of the fire and if the fire was out or not. (And if the chief was as good as he was supposed to be, he should be able to tell that from the conditions on the outside of the structure.) Everything else, he asks of the truck officer: Where are the ladders? Are you into the fire area yet? How's the primary search going? What's the condition of vertical ventilation? Did you start a secondary search? Overhauling? Utilities? Victim condition? Clear the stairs, the street. Pick up the fire escape drop ladder. Help the engine pick up the hose. Don't forget to wash your tools when you get back.

A lot to do and a lot to know. What qualities should the firefighter who is assigned to or who gravitates to truck work possess?

*Well trained.* As can be seen from above, he should know the job of the engine company and the supportive functions of the ladder company. Then he must know at least one (hopefully more than one) way to perform all the duties that may be required. He must also have a thorough knowledge of the tools and equipment that are available to fulfill those responsibilities. He must be familiar with the procedures and techniques that will assure success at any of the many tasks that truck companies must perform at every fire or emergency operation.

*Capable of making decisions.* Firefighters performing truck functions must constantly make individual decisions based on an ongoing size-up and valid risk analysis. As the firefighter arrives at the fire scene, initial commands may indeed have central focus in the officer. However, after he enters the building, where to search, what pattern to follow, what windows to vent, where to cut the roof at a top-floor fire, and what to do second, third.... sixth are just a few of the rapid-fire, individual decisions that he must make. If the individual is not capable of such decision making, he's not ready or adequately prepared for truck functions.

*Aggressive.* Operating in the truck mode is, by its nature, aggressive. We cannot be stopped at an occupied structure fire by high heat, flame, impingement, missing staircases, and locked or blocked entrances. If the conditions are impossible to mitigate rapidly or to reverse, we must go another way. To be able to force or breach entry, entry from above by rope or below by portable ladder or fire escape requires stamina, determination, and aggressiveness.

*Alone.* I know that we always operate in teams. However, we may be separated from our searching buddy by narrow hallways, small bedrooms, or remote tasks that must be done in a coordinated effort or simultaneously. We may be forced to operate alone by rapid changes within the structure that cause "mayday" evacuation of an area or building (smoke, explosion, flashover, uncontrolled explosive atmosphere, or collapse). In any case, we must be able to think and operate alone.

*Without proper protection.* We do not always operate under the protection of a handline. There is no "always" in the fire services—and this is assuredly one of the most common. The frantic pleading of a mother who tells you exactly where she left her baby in the burning building and the risky search of the floor above the fire in a private dwelling with an open staircase are only a few examples of times that we can routinely operate without adequate fire extinguishment protection.

What are some of the duties of a "truckie"—those tasks that must be accomplished at every occupied structure fire if we are to be safe and effective in our extinguishment operations?

*Locate the fire.* Most will say that the first job is to rescue life. But as we said before, you will never know who is in the most danger until you can mentally locate where the fire is or, in some cases, make a trained guess. Is it in the front or rear of a building that is separated by a public hall? Is it in the shaft? What floor is it on? What is the exposure problem above it? Is it on the top floor?



## MFD September 2009 Training Article Aerial Truck Placement and Truck Company Functions Tom Brennan

*Position of apparatus.* This is accomplished by pre-incident planning, communication, and training. Proper position is only possible if you physically and mentally slow down. Do your size-up, outguess the fire, and pick the best place for maximum effective use of your aerial device and its equipment.

*Force entry* to the fire area, the building, the fire occupancy, and the internal and external exposures. Knowledge of tool use and recognition and operation of lock assemblies are necessary today. The effectiveness of the firelight depends on what doors you select and how efficiently you force them.

*Isolate the fire*—temporarily at least. Quickly get to the seat of the fire. Size up and know your enemy. Gain some time by using an extinguisher or closing a door after a quick search. Communicate the location to the advancing hose crew. Effective positioning of the handline that's the proper size will gain you even more time and calm you down.

*Search, rescue, and life support* are all major responsibilities at occupied structure fires. The primary search must be as rapid, orderly, methodical, and effective as possible. You primarily are responsible for the fire floor and the floors above it. The people located in those positions are real rescues. Those located in horizontal exposures and the floors below are not. You secondarily assist in their removal. The floors below the fire and the horizontal exposures are part of the secondary search.

*Ventilation.* Insufficient, ineffective, or improper venting can destroy the firefight and the rescue effort and cause additional injuries and even deaths. We are responsible for venting the fire building vertically (immediate at most fires) and horizontally to support the search and/or extinguishment effort. It is not simply a cut-and-bust operation. We are professional and select primary and secondary channels to improve conditions and positively impact the fire behavior based on an ongoing size-up. The vent procedure can be simple at lower-floor fires or complex and ongoing at high-rise and top-floor fires.

*Laddering.* We are responsible for providing alternate entry to and exit from the fire structure by properly positioning ladder(s) of the right size at the front, rear, and sides of the building. Complex procedures may involve peak roofs, parapets, cellars, attics, and stair replacements. Innovative tactics are necessary for rear areas of large or attached row buildings.

*Examine for extension.* This is usually part of the search effort, but a ladder company function nevertheless. Knowledge of fire behavior, intimate understanding of building construction, and experience coupled with imagination are qualities necessary to carry out this duty effectively.

*Overhaul.* The fire is under control. This methodical, thorough, and controlled examination of the fire building for all possible extension of fire and its extinguishment is another truck responsibility. At completion we must be able to say that there is no possibility of a rekindle after we leave the scene.

*Salvage.* Although ongoing from our arrival, the salvage efforts eventually catch up with the fire area during overhaul. The watch-word for efficient salvage operations is care—care about structure and personal belongings. Remembering that 80 percent of fire loss is not related to the flames itself can place added emphasis on this exhausting and often unrewarding task.

*Lighting* is another ongoing function early at the exterior and later to the interior. There is never enough lighting on any fire-ground, which is indirectly proportionate to the amount of over-hauling injuries.

*Safety.* Ensure that the building or fire area is in as safe a condition as possible for returning civilians and passersby. Block or bridge all openings and other internal hazards. Remove any hanging or loose building parts that may fall at a later time. Clear the sidewalk and street of debris or other hazards. Rope off all areas dangerous to traffic—vehicle and pedestrian.

These functions just scratch the surface of the operations that must support extinguishment. It's unthinkable that a municipal official could logically support assigning one or two firefighters to even begin to fulfill the tasks of a truck company.



### Up Coming Drills

## September 2009 Training

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

### September

- 9/16- High Rise Firefighting
- 9/19 - Mid-Rise Drill
- 9/23 - Cross Training
- 9/30 - Cross Training

## October 2009 Training

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

### October

- 10/03 - SCFTC Engine Co. Operations
- 10/07 - Cross Training
- 10/14 - Water Supply Operations
- 10/21 - F.A.S.T. Training
- 10/25 - Cross Training

**Note:**

MVA/Car Fire Training will be announced as vehicles are obtained. Additionally, each Training Session will address OSHA topics and a log will be kept for each firefighter.



## **Training Announcement**

**Topic:** Engine and Ladder Company Hands On Operations  
**Instructors:** FDNY Firefighter Scott Hickey & FDNY Lt. Mike Ciampo  
**Location:** Saratoga County Fire Training Center  
**Date:** Saturday 10/3  
**Time:** 8 AM

**Details:** FF Scott Hickey from Truck 45 in Washington Heights Manhattan and Lt. Mike Ciampo will cover both engine and truck responsibilities on the fire scene and from the perspective of experienced firefighters. This is a hands on drill that will require members to conduct extinguishment, search, and ventilation tasks. It is a rare opportunity for MFD to be able to host such well trained and knowledgeable instructors, thus, attendance is strongly encouraged. All members that sign up will be required to attend and participate. If interested, please refer to the sign up sheet at one of the fire stations.

**Questions:** Call Tim Cuilla at 588-3970 or email at [tim.cuilla@gmail.com](mailto:tim.cuilla@gmail.com)

### **Instructor Background:**

Scott Hickey is a 22 year veteran of the fire service. Currently, he is a member of the FDNY Tower Ladder 45 where he has worked for the last sever years. Before joining FDNY, Scott spent fifteen years as a volunteer in Saratoga County.

Michael Ciampo is a lieutenant with the Fire Department City of New York (FDNY) where he has served for 18 years. He was previously a firefighter with the District of Columbia Fire Department for five years. Prior to his career experience, Ciampo joined the Wyckoff (NJ) Volunteer Fire Department in 1979 and was a fourth generation volunteer firefighter. He has a bachelor's degree in fire science from John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Ciampo is the lead instructor for FDIC's Hands-On Training portable ladders class and is a frequent lecturer on truck company operations at FDIC. He is a contributing editor and editorial advisor for Fire Engineering and authored the portable ladder chapter in the soon to be released textbook Firefighter I & 2. A certified New York state fire instructor, Ciampo is also a NYSAFC Hands-On Training Program instructor in truck company operations and live burn evolutions. He has also instructed at the Firehouse Expo and numerous other fire service tradeshow across the country.



**Mechanicville Fire  
Department**

## August Alarms

**114 8/03 Mutual Aid**

Mutual aid to Hillcrest for a fire alarm activation at 48 Johnson Rd. All daytime mutual aid was held in station.

**115 8/05 MVA w/PI**

Car vs. Pedestrian MVA on Park Ave. in front of McDonalds. 39-0 responded and held all units in station. No injuries per EMS on scene.

**116 8/07 Mutual Aid**

Mutual aid to Hemstreet Park for a brush fire on River Rd. ETA 42-1 responded. Crews assisted HPFD with manpower at the scene and water supply.

**117 8/07 Mutual Aid**

Mutual aid to Hemstreet Park for a brush fire on River Rd. ETA 44-1 and 42-1 responded with Car 39.

**118 8/08 Outside Smoke Condition**

Reported outside smoke condition in the area of 218 South Third Ave. Called unsure if it was a controlled burn or structure fire. ETA 44-1, T 39-1 and Car 39-0 responded. Determined to be an outside burn,

**119 8/12 Mutual Aid**

Mutual aid with Hillcrest for a Fire Alarm. Call cancelled. Fire Control dispatched the wrong departments.

**120 8/12 Transformer Fire**

Reported transformer fire in the area of 510 Grant St. ETA's 44-1 and 42-1 responded with Car 39. The fire was unfounded and NYSEG was notified.

**121 8/13 MVA w/PI**

2 Car MVA at East Saratoga and North Main Street. ETA 42-1 and Car 39 responded. Crews contained leaking fluids and assisted EMS with victim removal.

**122 8/15 MVA**

Vehicle over an embankment on William St. at the church. Car 39-9 and U 39-2 on scene. All other units cancelled.

**123 8/16 EMS Assist**

EMS requesting lifting assistance on Park Place.

**124 8/16 Structure Fire**

Working structure fire caused by a lightning strike at 297 South Main St. See inside article for more information.

**125 8/17 Mutual Aid**

Daytime mutual aid with Hillcrest for a fire alarm at St. Luke's Church on McBride Rd. Car 34 cancelled ETA 42-1 while en route.

**126 8/18 Hazardous Condition**

Flooding Central Ave.

**127 8/18 Hazardous Condition**

Flooding Ellsworth Ave.

**128 8/18 Hazardous Condition**

Flooding First Ave.

**129 8/18 Mutual Aid**

Mutual aid to Hemstreet Park for a reported structure fire at 359 Old Schaghticoke Rd. Caller reported the home was struck by

lightening and there was an odor of smoke. ETA 42-1 and Car 39-0 responded. MFD personnel check the residence with a TIC and determined there was no fire.

**130 8/18 Hazardous Condition**

Report of wires burning on Central Ave in front of Country Living. No hazard found. Good intent call only. ETA 44-1 and Cars 39-0 and 39-9 responded.

**131 8/19 Structure Fire**

Caller reported smoke showing at Kearney's Service Center. Crews arrived to find a smoke condition coming from the building and forced the front door. Crews found it to be a wood stove being used to burn trash after hours.

ETA 44-1, 42-1, E 41-1 T 39-1, U 39-2 and Cars 39, 39-9 and 39-0 responded.

**132 8/20 Hazardous Condition**

121 6th Ave. for a report of power lines down. Found to be a cable line only. ETA 42-1 and Car 39-0 responded.

**133 8/20 Fire Alarm**

Car 39 reports audible fire alarm at the Community Center. Alarm was accidental. No response required.

**134 8/20 Fire Alarm**

Reported fire alarm at J.S. Moore Homes. Determined to be a faulty smoke detector. ETA 42-1, 44-1, U 39-2 and Cars 39-0 and 39-9.

**135 8/21 Stand By**

Stand By in station for severe weather.

**136 8/21 Fire Alarm**

Fire alarm activation at Bubbles Restaurant. Car 39-9 and ETA 42-1 responded. Car 39-9 arrived and determined that it was a false trouble alarm.

**137 8/21 Hazardous Condition**

Flooding Central Ave.

**138 8/21 Hazardous Condition**

Flooding Ellsworth Ave.

**139 8/21 Structure Fire**

Report of wires burning in a residence on Saratoga Ave. ETA 42-1, 44-1 and Car 39-9 responded. Residence checked with TIC. Situation deemed non-hazardous.

**140 8/21 Hazardous Condition**

Request for traffic control due to power outage.

**141 8/28 Mutual Aid**

Mutual aid to Hemstreet Park for a Structure fire on Knickerbocker Rd. ETA 44-1, 42-1 and Cars 39 and 39-9 responded.

**142 8/29 Rescue**

Report of a 2 y/o with his arm stuck in a heater. Child was freed by EMS prior to FD arrival. Cars 39 and 39-0 responded.

**143 8/30 Mutual Aid**

Mutual aid to Hemstreet Park for a reported structure fire. Fire out prior to arrival. ETA 42-1 and Car 39-9 responded.