

Apparatus Placement

A-025

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Apparatus function should regulate placement. Poor apparatus placement can reverse this rule, limiting the options or eliminating functions to which a unit could be assigned.

Fire fighters operate with a natural inclination to drive apparatus as close to the fire as possible. This often results in positioning of apparatus that is both dysfunctional and dangerous. The placement of all apparatus on the fireground should be a reflection of the following:

- w Standard operational procedure for first arriving apparatus
- w Staging procedure
- w A direct order from Command
- w A conscious decision on the part of the apparatus driver based on existing or predictable conditions

Effective apparatus placement must begin with the arrival of first units. The placement of the initial arriving engine and ladder should be based upon initial size-up and general conditions upon arrival. Generally, the first engine proceeds just past the fire building or in the front corner.

First arriving apparatus should place themselves to maximum advantage and go to work; later arriving units should be placed in a manner that builds on the initial plan and allows for expansion of the operation.

Avoid "belly to butt" placement on the fireground. Do not drive all fire apparatus directly in front of the fire. Reserve and mutual aid apparatus should stage a minimum of one hundred yards short of the immediate fire area and remain uncommitted until ordered into action by Command. Apparatus drivers should select staged positions with a maximum of tactical options and as assigned by S.O.G. if applicable.

In large, complex, and lengthy fireground operations additional apparatus should be staged consistent with a Staging procedure. Under these procedures, Command communicates directly with the Staging Officer for the additional resource required on the fireground.

Command must maintain an awareness that access provides tactical options and that the immediate fire area can quickly become congested with apparatus. The officer must regard apparatus on the fireground in two categories:

1. Apparatus that is working
2. Apparatus that is parked

Park out of the way. Apparatus that is not working should be left in the Staging Area or parked where it will not compromise access.

Maintain access lane down the center of roads wherever possible.

Think of fire apparatus as an expensive exposure; position working apparatus in a manner that considers the extent and location of the fire and a pessimistic evaluation of fire spread and building failure. Anticipate the heat, which may be released with structural collapse. Apparatus should generally be positioned at least 50 ft. away from involved buildings, even with nothing showing. Greater distances may be required in many situations.

Beware of putting fire apparatus in places where it cannot be repositioned easily and quickly; particularly operating positions with only one way in and out; i.e., yards, alleys, driveways, etc.

Beware of overhead power lines when positioning apparatus. Do not park where lines may fall.

If apparatus does become endangered, operate lines between it and the fire while you reposition it. When you do move it, move it to a position that is safe. It is dysfunctional to move apparatus several times throughout the progress of a fire.

Take maximum advantage of good operating positions and "build" the capability of units assigned to these effective positions.

These positions should offer maximum fire attack access to the fire area and be supplied with large diameter supply lines as quickly as possible. Subsequent arriving apparatus can be supplied from this apparatus. Place these "key" apparatus first before access is blocked by later arriving units.

Key tactical positions should be identified and engines placed in those locations with a strong water supply. The water supply should be at least one pumped LDH supply line from an engine.

When high volume is indicated, a second pumped supply line should be provided. The forward engine can distribute this water supply to a variety of hand lines, master streams, or devices.

Take full advantage of water sources close to the fire before laying additional supply lines to distant water sources. An engine drafting close to the fire can usually supply two "forward" engines in attack positions.

Secondary water sources should be used to obtain additional supply if the demand exceeds the capability of the initial supply.

Take advantage of the equipment on apparatus already in the fire area instead of bringing in more apparatus. Connect extra lines to engines which already have a good supply line instead of making "daisy chain" supply line connections.

Fire hose soon limits the general access, as the fireground operation gets older. Command and Sectors must direct apparatus to important positions as early as possible. Lines should be laid with attention to the access problems they present. Try to lay lines on the same side of street as the supply and cross over near the fire. When the aerial apparatus is not needed for upper level access or rescue, spot apparatus in a position that would provide an effective position for elevated stream operation if the fire goes to a defensive mode. Ladder drivers must consider extent and location of fire, most dangerous direction of spread, confinement, exposure conditions, overhead obstructions, and structural conditions in spotting apparatus. The truck should be spotted where the aerial can be raised and used effectively without repositioning. It must also be spotted for effective use of hand ladders and allied forcible entry equipment.

Spot the command vehicle in a manner that will allow maximum visibility of the fire building and surrounding area and the general effect of the apparatus operating on the fire. Command vehicle position should be easy and logical to find and should not restrict the placement or movement of other apparatus.

Ambulances and rescue units should be spotted in a safe position that will provide the most effective treatment of fire victims and fire fighting personnel, while not blocking movement of other apparatus or interfering with firefighting operations. Consideration must also be given for additional ambulance access to the Treatment Area in situations involving patient transportation.