

MODULE 4: IMPLEMENTING THE INCIDENT ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- 1. Identify three methods of implementing an action plan.*
 - 2. Demonstrate the ability to use effective communications to assign tactical objectives.*
 - 3. Given a scenario with identified strategies and tactics, determine the acceptable assignments to implement the action plan.*
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NOTE-TAKING GUIDE

IMPLEMENTING THE ACTION PLAN

Having completed the **think** (size-up) and **plan** (strategy and tactics) parts of the command sequence, the IC is now ready to **act**.

Last step prior to implementing the action plan is to evaluate available resources.

Tactical operations.

METHODS OF IMPLEMENTING THE ACTION PLAN

The IC has a choice as to how the plan is implemented.

Assigning tactics.

NOTE-TAKING GUIDE

Task definition: Tasks are those duties and activities performed by individuals, teams, crews, or companies which lead to the successful accomplishment of the designated tactic.

Assigning tasks.

Using SOP's.

COMMUNICATING THE ACTION PLAN

Best plan doesn't always work if you can't get others to understand what you are trying to do.

Communicate the plan in the order you want it accomplished.

Officers need to communicate task assignments to crews.

NOTE-TAKING GUIDE

SUMMARY

Implementation is the **act** part of the command sequence.

Three methods to communicate the action plan.

Communicating the action plan.

IMPLEMENTING THE ACTION PLAN

We have now reached the point in the command sequence where the fun starts. Having done a thorough size-up (Think) and formulated the strategy and tactics (Plan), we are ready to ACT and start putting the "wet stuff on the red stuff." The IC has determined the problems, has an action plan that addresses the problems, and has done a resource evaluation. Based on that resource evaluation the IC is now ready to carry out the plan.

Applying Resources

How well the action plan works will depend in large part on how well the IC applies the resources available or still responding. Several questions need to be addressed as part of the resource evaluation and the priorities the IC has established prior to crews being assigned. What resources can best accomplish which tactics? (Truck companies are usually better equipped to do ventilation and above-ground rescue than engine companies.) Are there enough resources to carry out the action plan? If not, call for more **now**. Is there a need for specialized equipment (heavy rescue squads, haz mat units, air trucks)? Is technical help needed (building engineers, specially trained fire personnel, product)? Will the current resources most likely need relief? (Have relief personnel there and ready, or get them on their way.)

As part of the initial size-up the IC would have identified existing or potential safety hazards. The hazards should be strongly considered when the IC determines the resource assignments in an effort to protect personnel safety.

Tactical Operations and Tasks

Tactical Operations are the specific tasks carried out by the assigned resources to accomplish the selected tactic.

IC's may talk about "their" fires and how "they" fought them, but we all know fires get put out by firefighters working in the worst of conditions and doing the things necessary to make IC's look good. We call these duties **tasks** and they are defined as those duties and activities performed by individuals, teams, crews, or companies that lead to the successful accomplishment of the designated tactic.

METHODS OF IMPLEMENTING THE ACTION PLAN

To implement the plan, the IC needs to communicate the assignments clearly so that all personnel have an understanding as to "who" is doing "what," and then coordinate "when" each assignment is to be initiated.

Assigning Tactics

The IC has a choice of available methods to implement the action plan. One choice is by assigning tactics. The tactics should be assigned in the order they need to be accomplished, which will aid in the coordination of the fireground activities. An example of assigning tactics is:

"Engine 1, confine the fire to room of origin and protect stairway for rescue on the second floor."

"Truck 1, conduct primary search on second floor."

By assigning tactics the IC allows companies the flexibility to determine the tasks that will best accomplish the tactics. Assigning tactics also limits the amount of radio traffic needed to implement the action plan, allows companies to react immediately to unforeseen or changing conditions, and reduces the demands placed on the IC.

When given its assigned tactic, the company has its job description, which will be the basis for feedback to the IC as to whether or not it is accomplishing its assignment. If all goes well and headway is being made, the IC needs to have the news that this portion of the action plan is working. If the company is unable to achieve its assignment the IC needs to be advised as soon as possible so that adjustments can be made in the action plan. To do this it is essential the IC be apprised as to why the company is not capable of attaining its assigned tactic. Not enough resources? Need specialized resources? Unanticipated conditions? Conditions have deteriorated since the original assignment? Whatever the bad news might be, let the IC know in time for the action plan to be modified so that the tactic can be successfully carried out. Whoever is assigned to accomplish the tactic has the responsibility to do what is necessary to get it done.

Assigning Tasks

Another method of implementing the action plan is for the IC to assign specific tasks rather than tactics which are broader in nature. An example of a task assignment would be:

"Engine 1, advance a 1-3/4" handline through the door on side B and attack the fire."

Tasks are those duties and activities performed by individuals, teams, crews, or companies that lead to the successful accomplishment of the designated tactics.

When assigning tasks rather than tactics, the IC retains the responsibility for the tasks being accomplished. This increases the amount of involvement on the part of the IC. Orders become more involved and take longer to convey, it increases the amount of radio traffic for the IC, and increases the number of decisions the IC must make.

While there are disadvantages to assigning tasks, there are times when it may be necessary or to the IC's advantage to do so. Some examples might be when the IC is assigning a company with little experience or training and is not comfortable giving the company the latitude to determine how the tactic should be met. Another could be when there are mutual-aid companies not involved in combined training and unfamiliar with what the IC expects when it is assigned a tactic to meet. A third would be when the assignment the IC has for a company is critical to the success of the action plan and there is even the slightest possibility of misunderstanding between the IC and the officer responsible for carrying out the assignment.

Using SOP's

A common method used by many departments to implement an action plan is the use of standard operating procedures (SOP's). SOP's are departmental policies that call for predetermined actions on the part of the responders to be taken under typical conditions.

SOP's require a minimal amount of communication to get the plan implemented. They limit the amount of time it takes to get companies into service when they are taking predesignated actions. When the SOP's are followed each company on the initial assignment knows what the other is doing and can coordinate its actions accordingly.

There are some inherent concerns officers should be aware of when using SOP's to implement the action plan. Among those is that SOP's do not fit

every emergency, and companies may take action before the problem is correctly identified. This may endanger personnel and result in a lack of coordination. Predetermined actions do not always work at an undetermined emergency.

Based on the IC's initial size-up, or because of safety considerations, the decision could be made to take exception to departmental SOP's. If this should occur it is important for the IC to inform the responding units that this is not a typical incident and to make sure they understand what the conditions are that warranted making a change in how they would usually approach an incident of this nature. If the IC doesn't let everyone know, firefighters will assume the worst and their actions will be tentative when the IC is expecting an aggressive attack. This is not the time for the IC to withhold information and keep secrets. Let responders know, so they can understand why this incident does not fit the typical mold.

COMMUNICATING THE ACTION PLAN

Having done everything to perfection up to this point you now have the perfect action plan and, therefore, can expect flawless results. Right? Wrong! The world's record action plan still can end up in the toilet if those responsible for carrying it out cannot understand what the IC is trying to do. How well you communicate the action plan will have a major impact on how well it is carried out.

Communicate the Plan

Good communication skills start with getting yourself calmed down to the point where you can convey the assignments to the companies in a calm, rational manner. This may require you to take a few seconds to **GYST** (**G**ather **Y**our**S**elf **T**ogether). Screaming, whimpering, and speaking at an octave level only dogs can hear does not instill confidence in those you are asking to make entry into a burning building. The IC needs to convey assignments in a clear, concise, and logical manner so that there is no misunderstanding and responders can have confidence in what he/she is asking them to do.

By communicating the plan in order of accomplishment the IC can give an initial indication of how the plan needs to be coordinated. The IC also should make it very clear to everyone if the operational mode is offensive, defensive, or transitional.

By using the communication model to transmit the action plan, the IC assures that assignments are understood by both the IC and those who received the assignment. A well-communicated action plan helps all to understand what the IC is trying to accomplish and how their part of the plan will help achieve the selected strategy.

Task Assignments

Not only does the IC need to communicate assignments effectively to the companies, the officers receiving the assignments need to communicate to their crews the tasks that need to be accomplished. The same requirements for effective communication apply to the officers as were applied to the IC. It is at the company or crew level where any misunderstanding can adversely affect the safety of personnel and turn a good action plan into a bad one.

SUMMARY

The command sequence offers an organized method of action planning that stresses following a logical process to identify the problems, developing a solution to address those problems, providing for firefighter safety, and keeping the IC in the proactive mode. For it to be effective officers need to use it at every incident so that it becomes a matter of habit. When used properly, it allows us to do a much more effective job of putting the "wet stuff on the red stuff."

Activity 4.1

Implementing The Action Plan

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to make the appropriate assignments to effectively implement the action plan.

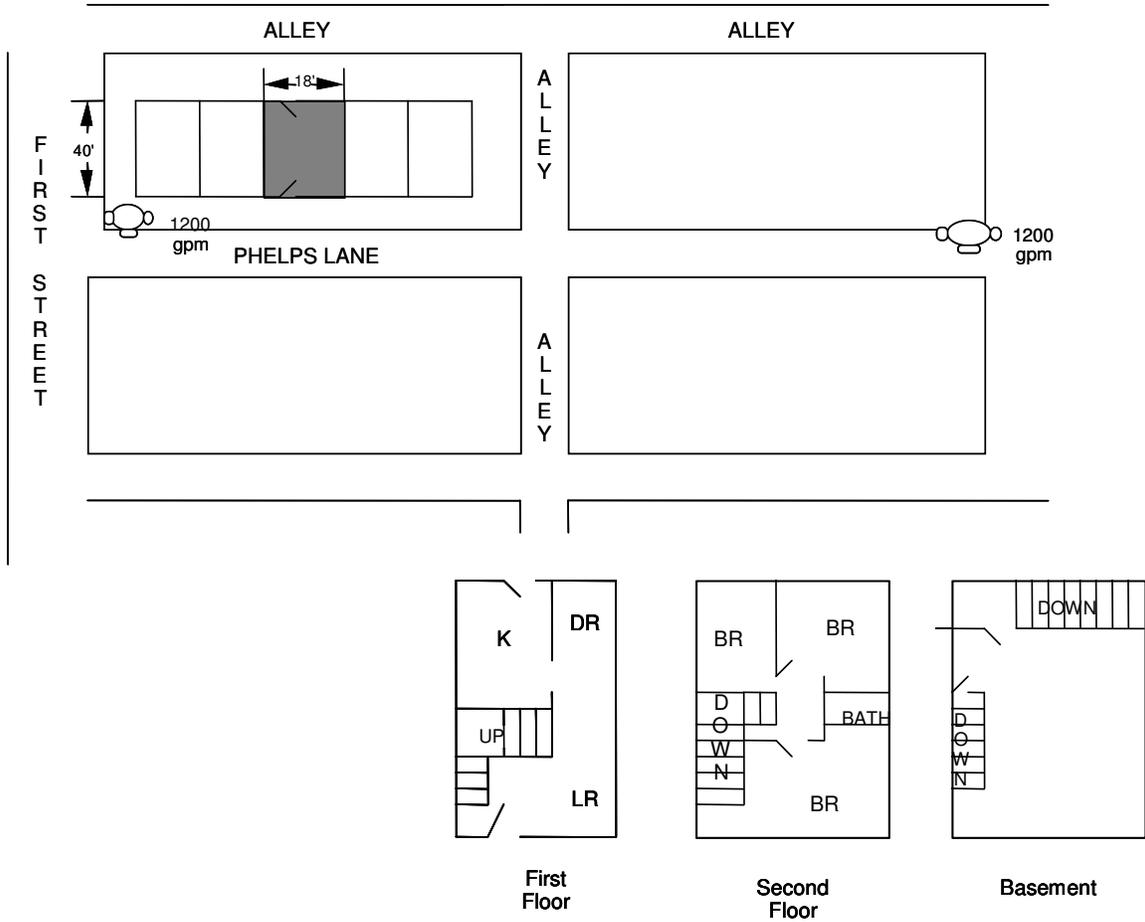
Directions

Your group will be assigned a scenario. As a group you will be given 20 minutes to:

1. Review the strategy and tactics identified in Activities 3.1 and 3.2.
2. Based on the strategy and tactics you have established, determine the assignments you would give the first-alarm responders to accomplish your action plan.
3. When listing your assignments on the easel pad, do not explain your assignments but state them in the same manner you would if transmitting them on the radio to the other responders.
4. Do not use SOP's as a method of implementing your action plan.
5. Apply the principles learned in the previous units to implementing your plan.

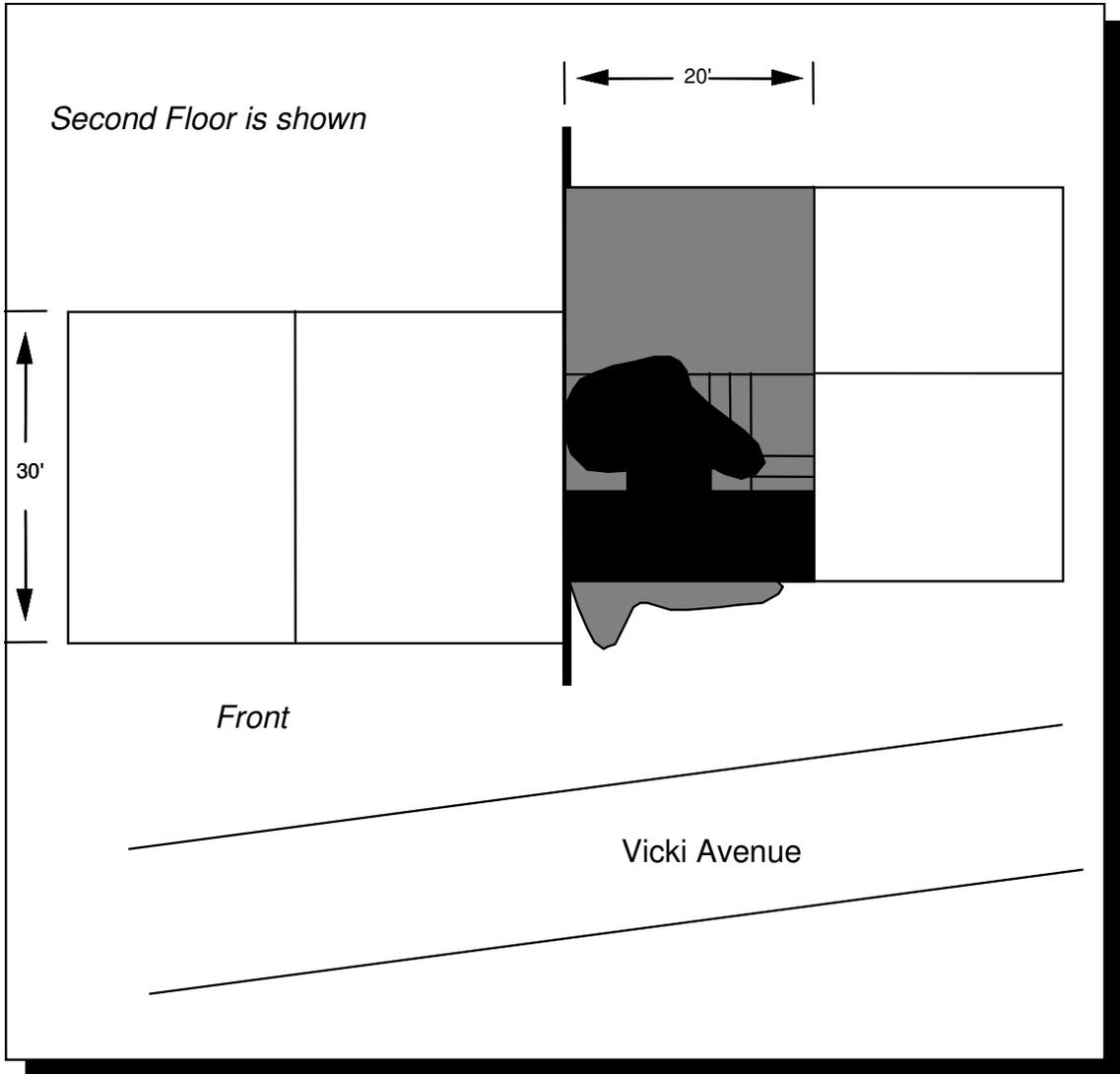
Your group will select a spokesperson to give your group report.

Activity 4.1 (cont'd)
Example Scenario
Plot Plan/Floor Plan



Activity 4.1 (cont'd) Example Scenario Quick Access Prefire Plan																	
Building Address: <i>100-108 Phelps Lane</i>																	
Building Description: <i>40' x 18', 2-story, ordinary (masonry wood-joint), common attic</i> Roof Construction: <i>Ridge pole and rafter, 1" x 6" sheathing</i> Floor Construction: <i>Beam and rafter, sheathing, hardwood floor</i>																	
Occupancy Type: <i>Townhouse</i>	Initial Resources Required: <i>2E, 1T, 1C 13 personnel</i>																
Hazards to Personnel: <i>None out of ordinary</i>																	
Location of Water Supply: <i>Phelps Lane & 1st Street</i>	Available Flow: <i>1,200 gpm</i>																
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td></td> <td colspan="4">Estimated Fire Flow</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Level of Involvement</td> <td><i>25%</i></td> <td><i>50%</i></td> <td><i>75%</i></td> <td><i>100%</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Estimated Fire Flow</td> <td><i>100</i></td> <td><i>200</i></td> <td><i>300</i></td> <td><i>420</i></td> </tr> </table> <p><i>Fire flow based on 1st floor of home with 2 exterior and 1 interior exposures</i></p>				Estimated Fire Flow				Level of Involvement	<i>25%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>100%</i>	Estimated Fire Flow	<i>100</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>420</i>
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Level of Involvement	<i>25%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>100%</i>													
Estimated Fire Flow	<i>100</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>420</i>													
Fire Behavior Prediction: <i>Rapid horizontal and vertical spread</i>																	
Predicted Strategies: <i>Rescue, ventilation, exposures, confinement, extinguishment</i>																	
Problems Anticipated: <i>No more than usual for a dwelling</i>																	
Standpipe: <i>None</i>	Sprinklers: <i>None</i>	Fire Detection: <i>None</i>															

Activity 4.1 (cont'd)
Plot Plan/Floor Plan
Scenario 1



**Activity 4.1 (cont'd)
Scenario 1
Quick Access Prefire Plan**

Building Address: *475 Vicki Avenue*

Building Description: *20' x 30', 2-story, wood frame*

Roof Construction: *Wood truss, gusset plate assembly*

Floor Construction: *Parallel chord wood truss covered with plywood*

Occupancy Type:
Apartment

Initial Resources Required:
Determined by class

Hazards to Personnel:
None more than usual for a dwelling

Location of Water Supply:
Determined by class

Available Flow:
Determined by class

	Estimated Fire Flow			
Level of Involvement	<i>25%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Estimated Fire Flow	<i>150</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>450</i>	<i>600</i>

Fire flow based on 2 floors and 2 exterior exposures

Fire Behavior Prediction:
Fast horizontal and vertical spread

Predicted Strategies:
Rescue, ventilation, confinement, extinguishment

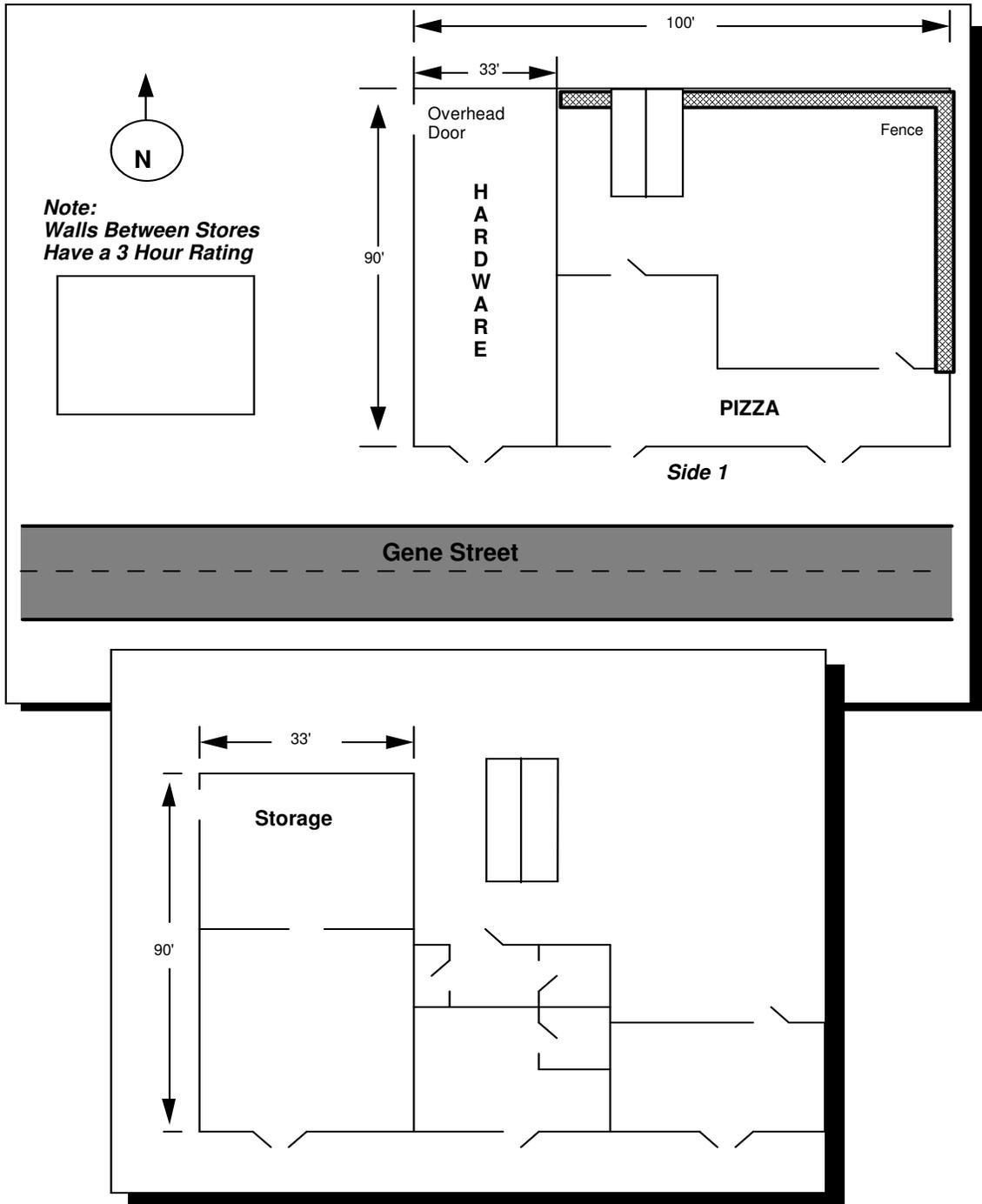
Problems Anticipated:
Early collapse of floor and roof assemblies

Standpipe:
None

Sprinklers:
None

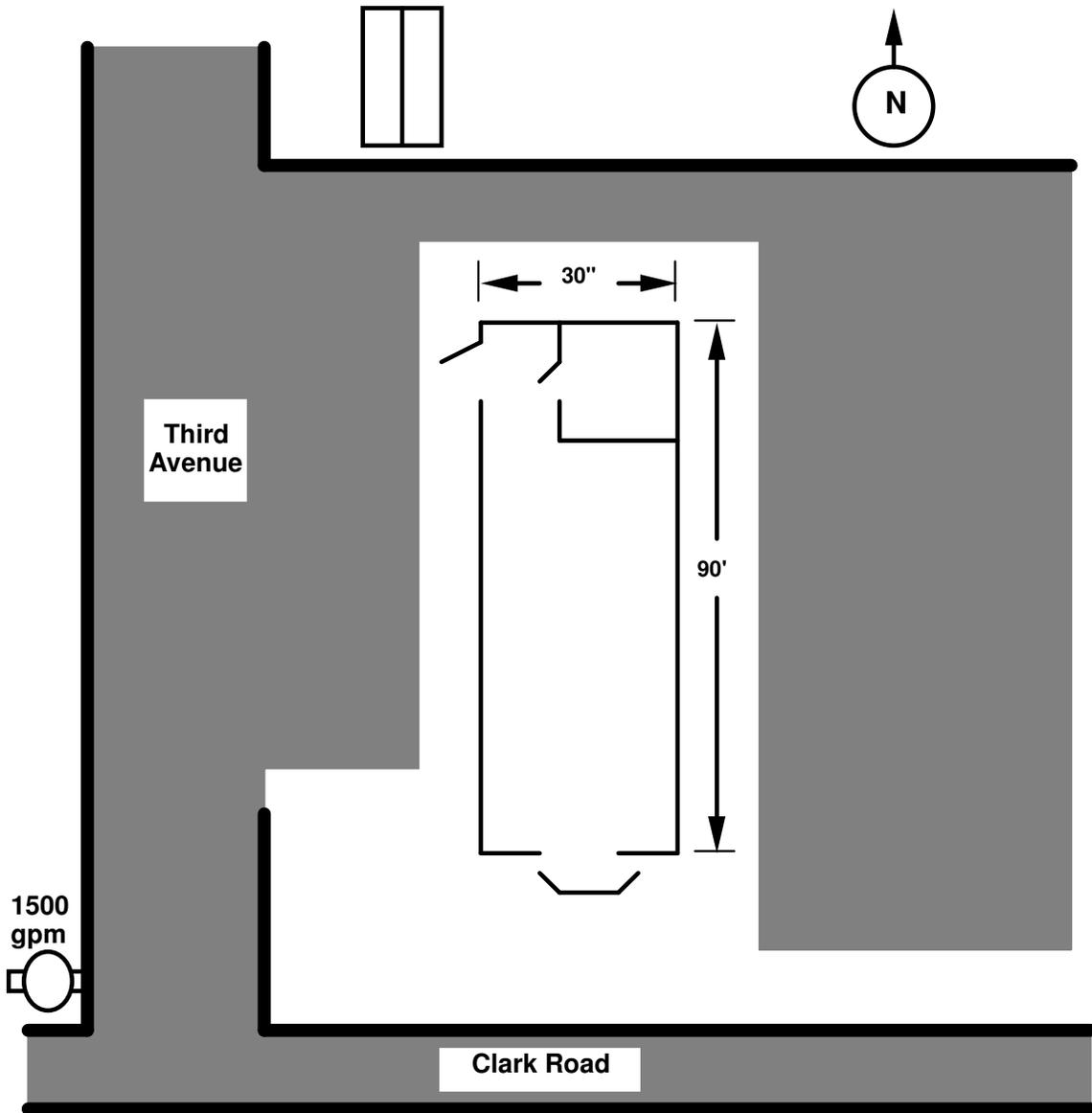
Fire Detection:
None

Activity 4.1 (cont'd)
Scenario 2
Plot Plan/Floor Plan



Activity 4.1 (cont'd) Scenario 2 Quick Access Prefire Plan																	
Building Address: <i>1020 Gene Street</i>																	
Building Description: <i>2, 1-story, ordinary construction; largest fire area 33' x 90' firewall between occupancies</i>																	
Roof Construction: <i>Wooden 2" x 10" rafters, plywood, composition roof covering</i>																	
Floor Construction: <i>Concrete slab</i>																	
Occupancy Type: <i>Retail stores</i>	Initial Resources Required: <i>Determined by class</i>																
Hazards to Personnel: <i>Pesticides, flammable/combustible liquids</i>																	
Location of Water Supply: <i>Determined by class</i>	Available Flow: <i>Determined by class</i>																
<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td></td> <th colspan="4" style="padding: 5px;">Estimated Fire Flow</th> </tr> <tr> <th style="padding: 5px;">Level of Involvement</th> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><i>25%</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><i>50%</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><i>75%</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><i>100%</i></td> </tr> <tr> <th style="padding: 5px;">Estimated Fire Flow</th> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><i>375</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><i>750</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><i>1,125</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><i>1,500</i></td> </tr> </table>				Estimated Fire Flow				Level of Involvement	<i>25%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>100%</i>	Estimated Fire Flow	<i>375</i>	<i>750</i>	<i>1,125</i>	<i>1,500</i>
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Level of Involvement	<i>25%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>100%</i>													
Estimated Fire Flow	<i>375</i>	<i>750</i>	<i>1,125</i>	<i>1,500</i>													
<i>Fire flow of largest fire area--hardware store and 2 exposures</i>																	
Fire Behavior Prediction: <i>Rapid horizontal spread within one occupancy</i>																	
Predicted Strategies: <i>Confinement, ventilation, extinguishment</i>																	
Problems Anticipated: <i>Poor rear access, limited horizontal ventilation</i>																	
Standpipe: <i>None</i>	Sprinklers: <i>None</i>	Fire Detection: <i>None</i>															

Activity 4.1 (cont'd)
Scenario 3
Plot Plan/Floor Plan



**Activity 4.1 (cont'd)
Scenario 3
Quick Access Prefire Plan**

Building Address: *1590 Clark Road*

Building Description: *30' x 90', 1-story, ordinary construction with basement*

Roof Construction: *2" x 10" rafters, plywood, composition covering*

Floor Construction: *2" x 10" rafters, sheathing and hardwood flooring*

Occupancy Type:
Bar and Lounge

Initial Resources Required:
Determined by class

Hazards to Personnel:
None more than usual

Location of Water Supply:
*Corner of Clark Road
and Third Ave.*

Available Flow:
1,500 gpm

	Estimated Fire Flow			
Level of Involvement	<i>25%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Estimated Fire Flow	<i>225</i>	<i>450</i>	<i>675</i>	<i>900</i>

Fire Behavior Prediction:
Rapid horizontal fire spread

Predicted Strategies:
Confinement, ventilation, extinguishment

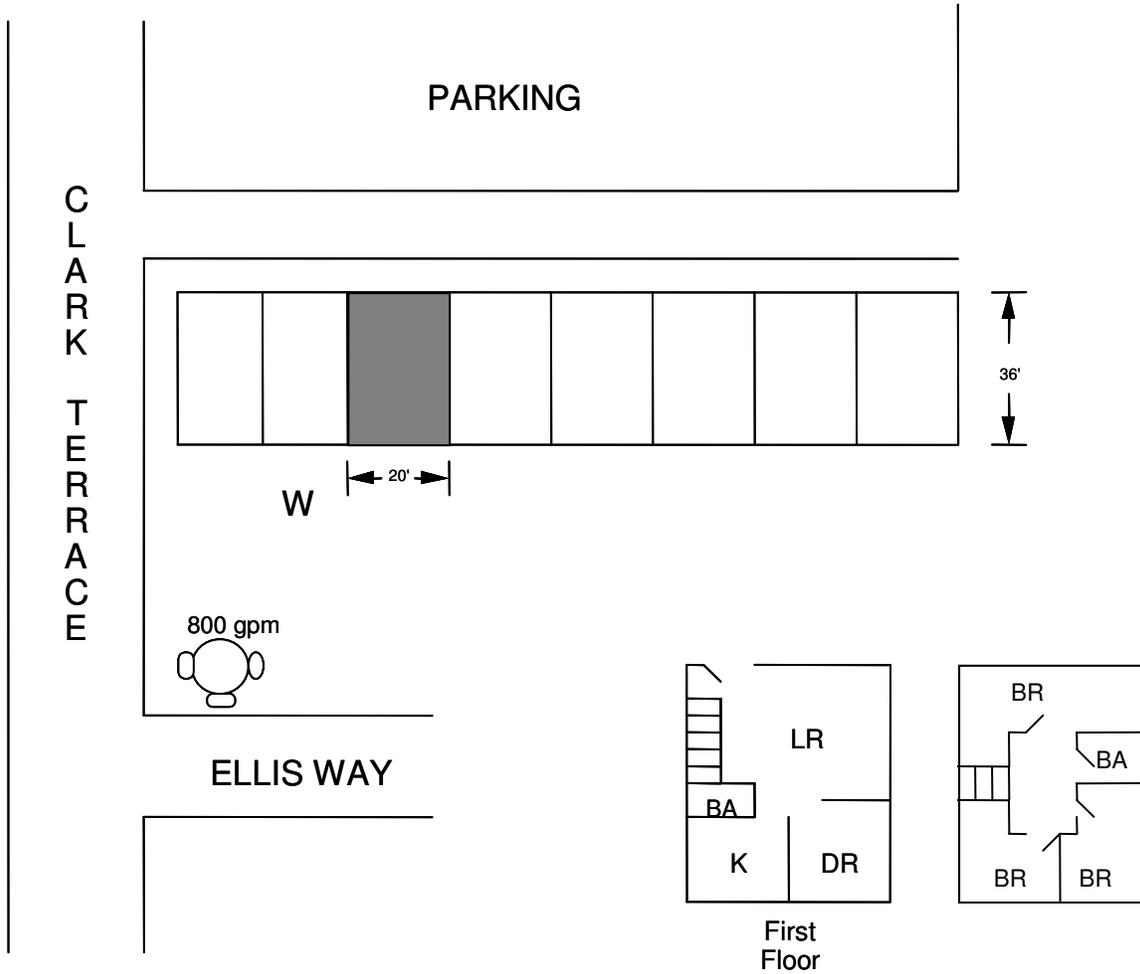
Problems Anticipated:
Interference by patrons

Standpipe:
None

Sprinklers:
None

Fire Detection:
None

Activity 4.1 (cont'd)
Scenario 4
Plot Plan/Floor Plan



**Activity 4.1 (cont'd)
Scenario 4
Quick Access Prefire Plan**

Building Address: *600-614 Clark Terrace*

Building Description: *20' x 36', 2-story, wood frame*

Roof Construction: *2" x 4", nailed, wood truss, common attic*

Floor Construction: *1st floor--concrete slab, 2nd floor--platform, 2" x 8" rafters, plywood sheathing*

Occupancy Type:
Townhouse

Initial Resources Required:
Determined by class

Hazards to Personnel:
None more than normal for a dwelling

Location of Water Supply:
Clark Terrace and Ellis Way

Available Flow:
800 gpm

	Estimated Fire Flow			
Level of Involvement	<i>25%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Estimated Fire Flow	<i>100</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>420</i>

Fire flow based on 1st floor of 1 house with 2 exterior and 1 interior exposures

Fire Behavior Prediction:
Rapid horizontal and vertical spread

Predicted Strategies:
Rescue, exposures, ventilation, confinement, extinguishment

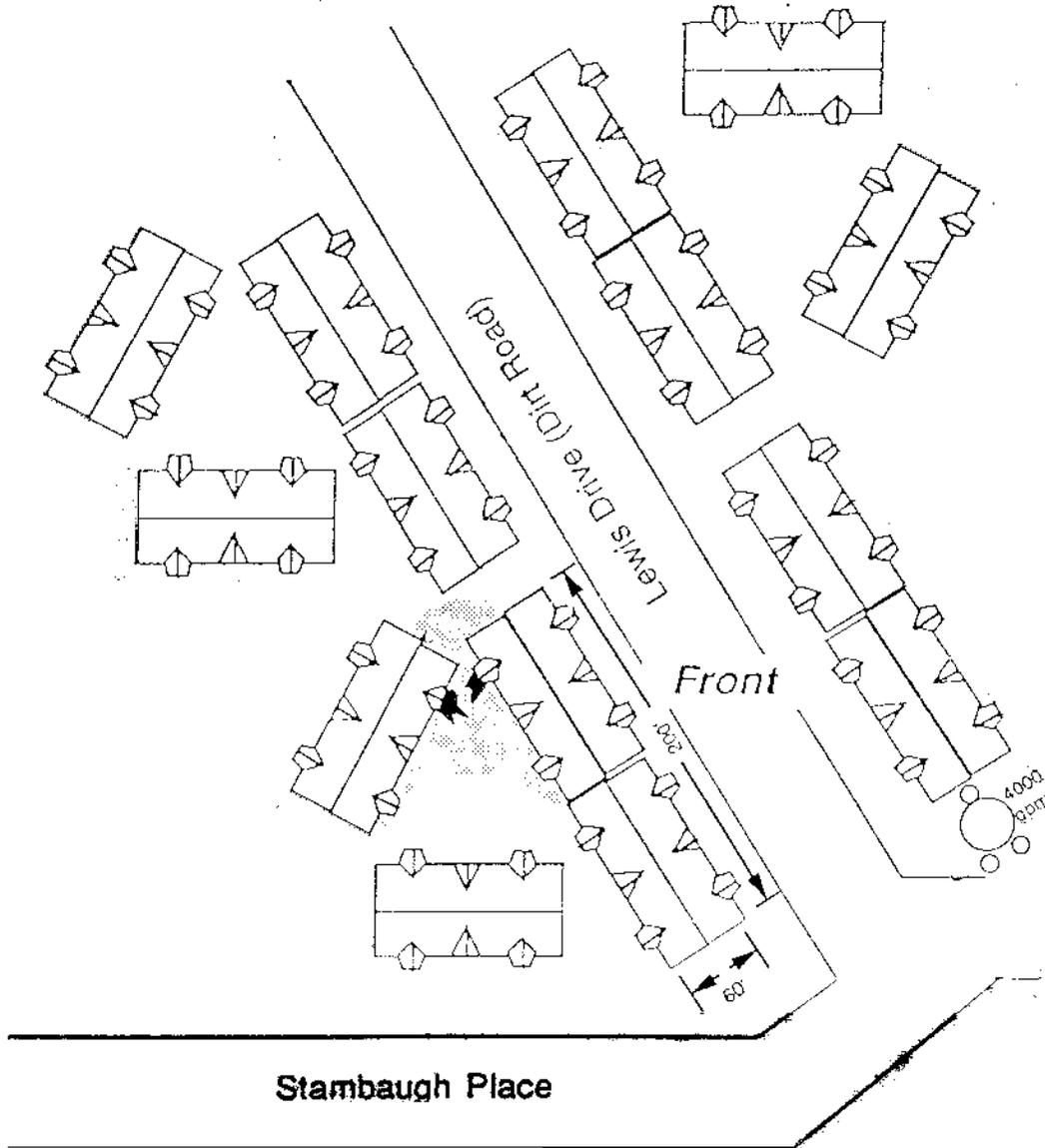
Problems Anticipated:
Limited access, limited egress, common attic

Standpipe:
None

Sprinklers:
None

Fire Detection:
None

Activity 4.1 (cont'd)
Scenario 5
Plot Plan/Floor Plan



**Activity 4.1 (cont'd)
Scenario 5
Quick Access Prefire Plan**

Building Address: *Lewis Drive and Stambaugh Place*

Building Description: *60' x 200', 3-story, wood frame (under construction)*

Roof Construction: *2" x 4" gusset plate wood truss, plywood sheathing*

Floor Construction: *1st floor--concrete slab, 2nd/3rd floor--parallel chord wood truss, plywood sheathing*

Occupancy Type:
Unoccupied apartments

Initial Resources Required:
Determined by class

Hazards to Personnel:
Radiant heat, early collapse, rapid fire spread--no drywall on walls

Location of Water Supply:
Lewis Drive and Stambaugh Place

Available Flow:
4,000 gpm

	Estimated Fire Flow			
Level of Involvement	<i>5%</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Estimated Fire Flow	<i>750</i>	<i>1,500</i>	<i>3,750</i>	<i>15,000</i>

Fire flow on entire open 3-story building with exposure

Fire Behavior Prediction:
Rapid horizontal and vertical spread

Predicted Strategies:
Exposures, confinement, extinguishment

Problems Anticipated:
Limited access, unfinished roads

Standpipe:
None

Sprinklers:
None

Fire Detection:
None