HIGH RISE GUIDELINES FOR FIRST ARRIVING COMPANY OFFICERS

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1. Your primary objective, as a first arriving company officer is to determine the location and extent of fire. Don't let distractions deter you from this critical size up. Your report will determine the initial strategy and tactics and ultimately the success or failure of the operation.
2. **Do not** silence fire alarm without advising residents with the voice command /PA system that an emergency still exists.
3. **Scroll back** in alarm panel's history to view previous alarms. For example, activation of a smoke detector in an elevator lobby was preceeded by a water flow in the trash chute.
4. Stack effect, HVAC systems and sprinklers can fool you: Forcing smoke to floor above or below the actual fire floor.
5. Report of smoke on several floors and loss of electrical power: Suspect fire involving bus duct. Request Power Company, s/o mains, check electric meter rooms on every floor and check every elevator for trapped occupants.
6. Smoke on upper floor due to trash chute fire:
   First, close guillotine door, then check chute for blockage above smoky floor.
7. **Do not ascend before you have:**
   A) Checked the alarm panel and scrolled back in its history.
   B) Conferred with building residents, maintenance and security personnel
   C) Determined floor layout, location of stairwells, elevators and floors served by express elevators and attempted to obtain master keys.
   D) Action taken in haste and excitement without this information can be worse than no action at all

8. **Control doors to minimize flow paths, reduce stack effect and maintain pressurization.** Only chock doors open to advance hose lines. **Do not chock open lobby, loading dock and ground floor exterior stairwell doors; do not collapse lobby revolving doors.**

8. Recall elevators even if you don't intend on using them. Recall achieves:
   A) ability to account for elevators and trapped victims,
   B) Prevent occupants from using elevators.
9. Elevator use safety tips:

A) do not use if fire below 6th floor
B) use elevators on Phase II, fire department control
C) examine shaft for smoke or water
D) equip your company with tools for emergency escape
E) don't overload/overcrowd elevator
F) ascend 2-3 floors below the reported fire floor
G) ascend in increments of 3-5 floors to check function and re-examine shaft for smoke or water
H) If stuck in stalled elevator, consider risk of remaining in elevator awaiting rescue against the risk of attempting to break out.

10. Never take less than 200 ft of hose with you.
11. Use smooth bore nozzle for maximum flow at low pressures and to avoid clogging with debris.
12. Low pressures, long stretches and large floor areas necessitate the use of 2 ½ inch hose with 1 1/8- 1 ¼ smooth bore tips.
13. Don't underestimate how quickly personnel will tire and expend their SCBA air supply. Call for help early and stage relief personnel two floors below the fire.

10. Check FDC inlets for debris, insect nests and presence of clappers. Use a spanner wrench to probe FDC for debris; not your hand.
11. Frozen swivels on FDC: use double males and females.
12. If damaged or missing FDCs: pump into first floor outlets. If building has **pressure reducing** hose outlet valves, you will have to pump into the fire pump test header when unable to pump into an FDC.

13. Flush standpipe outlet before connecting hose to clear out years of sediment.

15. Resist urge to stretch and connect standpipe hose lines before determining location of fire.
16. When nozzle reaches fire apartment, keep advancing hose to allow for at least 50 ft. of hose to reach all areas inside apartment. Alternate tactic: When using 2 1/2in. hose; knock down main body of fire from doorway and connect 50 ft. of 1 ¾ - 2 in. hose to the 2 1/2in nozzle for maneuverability.
17. When you use stairway for fire attack, remember you will turn it

into a chimney. You must clear occupants of attack stairway above fire floor before opening stairwell on fire floor. Direct occupants to an evacuation stairwell.

18. Search stairwells, especially at upper levels end elevators as soon as possible.

19. Familiarize yourself with floor below fire:

A) Examine apartment/room directly below fire (ex: fire in Apartment #1203, find #1103

B) Locate closest stairway for attack

C) Count number of doors from apartment directly below fire to attack stairway.

D) Count number of corners that will be encountered in hose advance and assign at least one firefighter to maneuver hose around each corner.

20. Laying uncharged hose the attack stairwell can only be performed under **ideal conditions.** You will never go wrong with connecting a hose line, laying it out and charging it on the **floor below the fire.** EXCEPTION: When fire is contained within closed apartment and fire floor hallway is tenable, connect to outlet on floor below and stretch uncharged hose up stairs to door of fire apartment.

21. When advancing a charged hose line from the floor below the fire up a return stairway you will need at least two companies (six firefighters) ; one company to advance down hallway and one company, "mules" to work in the stairwell; one on the floor below the fire, one at the half landing and one at the fire floor landing.

22. Don't just bleed nozzle of air, flow it to ensure adequate flow pressure and proper pattern. Static pressure read on an in-line gauge is meaningless; you must read the pressure and judge the quality of the stream with the **nozzle flowing.**

23. Remember, it is practically impossible to totally evacuate a high rise building in a timely fashion.

Most occupants of residential high rises are safer in their rooms/apartments than venturing into a smoky hallway if they can be protected "in place".

A protect-in-place strategy depends on those first arriving companies accomplishing their primary mission: Rapidly determine the location and extent of the fire. Additionally, occupants must be advised/reassured by FD personnel with the fire alarm system's voice control/command (PA) system

24. A secondary search is not complete until all floors/areas are monitored for carbon monoxide.
25. Be aware of the **wind** and its possible effect on the fire.

A) Flames visible in a window but not issuing from the window may indicate a wind-driven fire. Flame pushing from a "peep hole" of an apartment door indicates a wind-driven fire.

B) Assess wind direction and velocity in apartment directly below fire; open stairwell door, if possible to replicate flow path on fire floor.

C) **Never** force open a door across the hallway from a fire apartment that is subject to strong winds.

D) Consider forcing an **area of refuge to escape into if you cannot make it back to the attack stairway;** an apartment on the same side of the hallway as the fire apartment, between the fire apartment and the attack stairway.

E) **Control the door to the fire apartment.** Consider using an outside stream, "floor below" nozzle or directing a stream from an adjoining apartment through a hole in the wall.

F) Avoid using a smoke tower as your attack stairway; it can create an area of low pressure and draw fire towards the stairway.