

# FIREHOUSE®

## Weekly Drill

### DRILL #82: HOTEL INCIDENTS

#### Introduction

Hotels provide the fire service with several operational objectives. One of the first things we need to understand is their protective systems. In newer construction, we can expect to find all the modern features, but it is not uncommon to find fire protection systems ranging from a single smoke alarm to a fully sprinklered structure.

Some hotels have their systems monitored by an alarm company, who upon reception of an alarm will call the local fire department or dispatch center and provide them with the needed information for a response. However, some hotels may have a tendency to delay notifications, as they send a staff member to investigate before notifying the local fire department.

Depending on local codes and ordinances, the hotel maybe equipped with a standpipe system. This standpipe system can be either a wet system or a dry system. Keep in mind that a dry standpipe system is going to require the fire department to pressurize it. If the hotel has a standpipe system, does your department have the needed equipment to utilize the system? More importantly, do you train on these systems?

Probably the most concerning item for your department is the life safety hazard associated with hotels. A fire in a hotel has the potential for generating a large loss of life. It is imperative that the fire department understands the hazards confronting them and ensures they have the resources to take decisive actions. Quick evacuation of occupants will be key to having a successful operation.

#### Types of Rescues

When it comes top apartments, there are several different types of rescues that you need to be prepared for, including:

- Rescues using interior stairways
- Rescues using portable ground ladders
- Rescues using fire escapes
- Rescues using aerial and platform apparatus

Some factors that must be taken into consideration during these rescues are;

- Access to escape routes may be blocked
- Some occupants may exhibit irrational behavior
- A shelter may need to be established



#### Questions and Answers

There are many questions that need to be asked (and answered) in order to develop the correct strategies and tactics for the situation:

- What is the time of day?
- What is the size of the hotel and number of rooms?
- Did we get a size-up report and assessment from the first-arriving company?
- What is the location of the fire and the fire potential?
- What's burning?
- What additional problems may arise?
- Which stairways are going to be used for fire attack and evacuation routes?
- What size hoseline will be required?
- What ventilation tactics will be needed?

Fire spread will follow the pipe chases and void spaces. In many instances fire will auto extend from window to window or fire will burn through the floors. In any event, water supply will be a major factor in fire control. Limited resources and manpower will also hinder operations, so call for additional resources early into the incident.

*—Prepared by Russell Merrick*