

FIREHOUSE®

Weekly Drill

DRILL #106: HOSE LOADS

Introduction

One thing for sure is that we need fire hose on our apparatus if we expect to get water on the fire. There are many different fire apparatus designs and just as many hose loads. The question is, which one is right for your department? The general rule of thumb is there are two different functions this hose is going to be used for, supply and attack.

In any event, the hose needs to incorporate speed and efficiency when being deployed off the apparatus. Many fire departments have gone so far as to have hose loads configured to store the hose with an appliance attached for quicker operations upon arrival. It only makes sense that whichever hose load we decide on using, deployment and activation are going to be key elements.

Because not all the hose beds on our fire apparatus are designed the same, from time to time a coupling may end up right where we need to fold the hose. In this case, we are going to have to incorporate what is known as a “Dutchman” by folding the hose back onto itself using a reverse fold.

Variations

The accordion load is one that can be used on our pre-connect lines. When used this way, the female coupling should be connected to the discharge piping. The hose then is stood up on its side, rather than laying flat. From this point the hose is laid back and forth from the back of the hose bed to the front of the hose bed. Caution should be used not to pack it too tight as this will make it difficult to deploy and could damage the hose. A nozzle then is placed at the end of the hose.

The flat load is most common, however, it does not look as nice as the accordion load. Most of the time the flat load is used on supply hose, but it can be used on pre-connected attack lines. When used for supply lines, the hose is laid flat in the hose bed starting with the male coupling. The hose is flaked back and forth in the hose bed with the last length having a hydrant gate attached to it.

Another popular load used for supply lines is the horse-shoe load. This particular load is relatively easy to load and it also deploys very well. For this load, the hose is



packed starting at the rear of the hose bed on either side. With the hose on its side, start laying the hose from the back corner of the hose bed along the hose bed walls until you reach the other corner. Once you reach the other corner, fold the hose back on itself and follow the hose back to the starting corner, forming a horseshoe.

Reel Time

I have seen some fire departments that use large diameter hose incorporate a hose reel for storing the hose. This is similar to the reels used with booster hose, only larger. A concern with using a reel comes into play when deploying the hose at an incident. The driver must control the speed of the apparatus, so as not to pull the hose during deployment. Additionally, the hose needs to be drained thoroughly before reeling it up after being used.

We've all heard it many times, that by taking time and care while loading the hose onto the apparatus it will pay huge dividends in the long run when being deployed at an incident.

—Prepared by Russell Merrick