

"The Chief's Corner"

January 2015

As we move into a new year, we also continue to move forward regarding any recent developments in the fire service. Technology and techniques are always changing or being revised to help us more efficiently and safely accomplish our objectives. Many times, the revisions that take place are as a result of the studies, research and experiments that are continuously done by Underwriters Laboratory (UL), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), or the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Specifically, the transitional attack as it relates to structural firefighting is on the forefront. Moreover, this tactic will now be taught in the new Firefighter I curriculum.

In simple terms, the transitional attack is a combination of offensive and defensive tactics and you will hear it being referred to as "offensive exterior operations and offensive interior operations". For example, you could begin an initial attack on the exterior to prevent a fire from extending up the side of a structure and into the roof area; which is a common occurrence with vinyl siding, and then advance in to make an interior attack. However, as with any type of call; other variables have to be considered in your assessment.

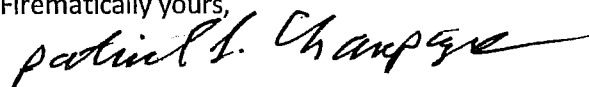
Another way in effecting a transactional attack from the exterior, is by operating the nozzle on a straight or solid stream and positioning it low into the window opening of the involved room and deflecting the water off the ceiling to knock down a large body of fire; then advance interior. The key here is the angle of the nozzle and to make sure you do not cover the window opening with your stream which would hinder horizontal ventilation.

The same objective holds true in transitioning from an interior to exterior attack. For example, if an interior attack is made in conjunction with a rescue; make the advance and knock down the necessary fire to effect the rescue and then exit the structure to operate on the exterior.

As for equipment, it will not be uncommon to utilize deck guns, ground monitors and 2 ½" hand lines on the exterior and then transition to 1 ¾" hand lines for the interior. As with any new tactic, it is important that it not be arbitrarily put into action without first training and educating everyone on it so they understand the purpose and how it works. Jonesville will be training on this in 2015.

Lastly, keep in mind that a transitional attack is not automatically used every time nor is it designed to make the interior attack obsolete; it is just another tactic to consider based on the variables. For example, if you have a fire that is not exposing other nearby areas or extending, then make the aggressive interior attack and put the fire out.

Firematically yours,



Patrick J. Champagne

Chief – Jonesville Fire Department

***This update is for informational and educational purposes and always refer to department SOGs.**