
S.O.P. #: 700-05

SUBJECT: TRAINING IN ACQUIRED STRUCTURES

DIVISION: FIRE RESCUE ACADEMY

Objective: To provide guidelines for the use of acquired structures for various types of training.

Overview: Citizens and businesses throughout Baltimore County may often contact fire stations to offer them the use of their occupancies for training purposes. The scope of activities that may occur in these structures ranges from burning of the structure to activities, such as search and rescue drills, that result in no intended damage. Regardless of the type of proposed activity, safe operations and appropriate permissions are paramount concerns when coordinating training in an acquired structure.

Note: This SOP does not cover training that involves normal operations within a building such as those encountered during company tours and fire inspections. The need to implement this SOP is based on the type of activity planned and the discretion of the Officer in Charge of the station engaged in training. The BC/DC should be consulted if any questions exist.

Section 1: General Guidelines

A. Acquired Structures Types

1. **Burn:** The structure that is offered is done so with the intent to burn the structure fully to the foundation after completion of the training. These types of training structures are often referred to as “houseburns”.
2. **Non-Burn Destructive:** The structure that is offered may be slated for demolition and the owner offers the use of the vehicle for destructive training that includes wall breaching, forcible entry, roof top operations, etc. There is no live fire training that occurs in these structures.
3. **Non-Burn Non Destructive:** The structure that is offered is usually not in any process of demolition and the owner allows training evolutions such as search and rescue, hose line advancement, and EMS scenario training. There is no intended damage to be incurred during the course of these training evolutions.

B. Logistics Procedures

1. When a fire station is contacted by a property owner for any type of training within an acquired structure, the Officer in Charge will gather the following information:
 - a. The property owner’s name and contact information
 - b. The address of the property
 - c. The type of training that is offered (Destructive, non-destructive, burn)
 - d. The time frame for possible training
 2. The Officer in Charge of the fire station submitting the request will contact the Fire Rescue Academy and convey the above information to a member of the acquired structure team.
 3. The Fire Rescue Academy member will coordinate a site visit with the Officer in Charge of the station making the request.
 4. The Fire Rescue Academy representative will make the determination if the training can occur, based upon structural and environmental hazards, as well as other risks.
 5. If the Fire Rescue Academy representative determines that the site is safe and that the training can proceed, the Officer in Charge will be tasked with developing an Incident Action Plan that includes, at minimum, NIMS ICS Forms 202 (Incident Objectives), 205 (Communications Plan), 208 (Site Safety Message/Plan), and a Form 360 with appointment of a Safety Officer.
 6. The Fire Rescue Academy Representative will initiate an Acquired Structure Booklet which will contain all of the items needed for the training to commence.
 7. At the discretion of the Director of Training or his/her designee, a representative from the Academy may be assigned to coordinate the on-site training activities during the operational period.
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Section 2: Necessary Items for Acquired Structure Training

The representative from the Fire Rescue Academy will coordinate the acquisition of the paperwork necessary for the training within the acquired structure. The following items must be secured in the Acquired Structure Booklet prior to the date of the training:

A. Burn

1. Deed validating ownership
2. Printout of State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT) validating ownership with no issues such as joint owners or foreclosure
3. Initial FRA Inspection Document
4. FRA punch list for items identified during initial site visit
5. Raze permit
6. Burn permit
7. Environmental permit
8. Proof of cancelation of hazard insurance on property
9. \$1,000,000 liability insurance obtained by property owner
10. Right of entry agreement signed by the Property Owner, Fire Chief, Law Office, and County Administrative Officer
11. Incident Action Plan

B. Non-Burn Destructive

1. Deed validating ownership
2. Printout of State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT) validating ownership with no issues such as joint owners or foreclosure
3. Initial FRA Inspection Document
4. FRA punch list for items identified during initial site visit
5. Raze permit or construction permit
6. Proof of cancelation of hazard insurance on property
7. Right of entry agreement signed by the Property Owner, Fire Chief, Law Office, and County Administrative Officer
8. Incident Action Plan

C. Non-Burn Non Destructive

1. Deed validating ownership
2. Printout of State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT) validating ownership with no issues such as joint owners or foreclosure issues
3. Initial FRA Inspection Document
4. FRA punch list for items identified during initial site visit
5. Right of entry agreement signed by the Property Owner, Fire Chief, Law Office, and County Administrative Officer
6. Incident Action Plan

Section 3: Operational Considerations

- A. The Fire Rescue Academy will conduct inspections of all acquired structures to ensure they are safe and free of any environmental hazards (asbestos, mold, etc.) and other risks.
- B. Training in acquired structures that are non-burn but destructive will be under the direct supervision of a member of the Fire Rescue Academy or an instructor approved by the Director of Training or his/her designee.

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- C. Training in acquired structures that are burned will be done so under the direct supervision of the Fire Rescue Academy. The training will be NFPA 1403 compliant and will be conducted by Maryland Instructor Certification Review Board (MICRB) certified instructors. NFPA 1403 compliant Burn Technicians (See SOP 700-13) will be used for the training.

- D. At the discretion of the Director of Training or his/her designee, a company commander can be tasked with overseeing the training that is conducted in an acquired structure that is non-burn and non-destructive. If so tasked, the officer will send a disposition summary to the Director of Training once the training is complete. This should include details about any damage that was incurred or any injuries sustained. Such information will not take the place of the standard notifications and documentation necessary for an on duty injury or any property damage.