

Campbell County Fire Department Standard Operating Procedure		
Operations	Fireground Strategy	401.02

I. PURPOSE:

The following procedure outlines the fireground strategy to be employed at structure fires.

II. SCOPE:

This procedure applies to all CCFD firefighting personnel and all fireground operations.

III. PROCEDURE:

1. Fireground operations will fall in one of two strategies, **OFFENSIVE OR DEFENSIVE**. The two strategies are based on standard Rules of Engagement & Risk Assessment Plan that is to be employed at **ALL** structure fires. This is the basis for this procedure.
2. Risk Assessment Plan:
 - 2.1. WE MAY RISK OUR LIVES A LOT TO PROTECT **SAVABLE** LIVES.
 - 2.2. WE MAY RISK OUR LIVES A LITTLE TO PROTECT **SAVABLE** PROPERTY.
 - 2.3. WE WILL NOT RISK OUR LIVES AT ALL TO SAVE WHAT IS ALREADY LOST.
3. Basic Operational Approach:
 - 3.1. Considering the level of risk, the Incident Commander will choose the proper strategy to be used at the fire scene. The strategy can change with conditions. The strategic mode will be based on:
 - 3.1.1. The building (type of construction, condition, age, etc.)
 - 3.1.2. Structural integrity of the building (contents vs. structural involvement)
 - 3.1.3. The fire load (what type of fuel is burning and what's left to burn)
 - 3.1.4. The fire and/or smoke conditions (extent, location, etc.)
 - 3.1.5. The rescue profile (savable occupants/survivability profile)
 - 3.2. The Incident Commander is responsible for determining the appropriate fireground strategy. Once the appropriate strategy is initiated, it becomes the Incident Commander's job to ensure that all personnel are operating within the strategy. By controlling the fireground strategy, the Incident Commander is providing overall incident scene safety. Proper strategy will be based on the following:
 - 3.2.1. Avoiding simultaneous **OFFENSIVE** and **DEFENSIVE** strategies in the fire area. This typically happens by first committing personnel to interior positions, then operating master streams from exterior positions. This places interior crews in danger of injury or death.
 - 3.2.2. Matching the appropriate strategy to the fire conditions of the structure, and minimizing risk to firefighters.
 - 3.3. Managing fireground strategy must start with the arrival of the first unit and be constantly monitored and evaluated throughout the entire incident. The initial

Initial Approval: July 2008 Revision Date:	Page 1 of 4	Don Huber, Fire Chief ORIGINAL SIGNED
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<h1>Campbell County Fire Department</h1> <h2>Standard Operating Procedure</h2>		
Operations	Fireground Strategy	401.02

Incident Commander *will include the fireground strategy in the size-up report.* As Command is transferred to later arriving officers, these officers assuming Command must evaluate the fireground strategy.

4. Fireground strategy provides a starting point to begin fireground operations. Once the strategy is announced, all firefighters know whether to operate on the interior or exterior of the building. The fireground strategy cannot be a mystery to anyone; everyone operating on the fireground must be operating in the same strategy mode: **Offensive or Defensive.**

5. Offensive Strategy:

5.1. Within the framework of the Risk Assessment Plan, the structure must first be determined to be safe to enter. Once determined safe, an Offensive Fire Attack is centered around RESCUE. When safe to do so, Command will initiate offensive operations at the scene of structure fires.

5.2. The following are guidelines for offensive fire attacks:

5.2.1. Initial attack efforts must be directed toward supporting a primary search--the first attack

5.2.2. line must go between the victims and the fire to protect avenues of rescue and escape.

5.2.3. Offensive fires should be fought from the INTERIOR-UNBURNED SIDE (interior capability is the principal offensive strategy factor).

5.2.4. Avoid exterior application of water during offensive operation. An attack from the exterior generally will drive the fire, smoke, and heat back into the building and drive the interior fire control forces out of the building.

5.2.5. Command must consider the most critical direction and avenues of fire extension, plus its speed, particularly as they affect:

5.2.5.1. Rescue activities

5.2.5.2. Level of risk to firefighters

5.2.5.3. Confinement efforts

5.2.5.4. Exposure protection

5.3. Command must allocate personnel and resources based upon this fire spread evaluation.

5.4. Command must consider the seven sides (or sectors) of the fire: front, rear, both sides, top, bottom, and interior. Fires cannot be considered under control until all seven sides are addressed. Failure to do so frequently results in fire extension.

Initial Approval: July 2008 Revision Date:	Page 2 of 4	Don Huber, Fire Chief ORIGINAL SIGNED
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Operations	Fireground Strategy	401.02

- 5.5. Early ventilation (natural or positive pressure) is a major support item. This must be initiated early and be well coordinated. Ventilation openings should be made in the fire area.
- 5.6. Positive pressure should be injected from the unburned side and exit out of the fire area.
- 5.7. **WRITE-OFF PROPERTY THAT IS ALREADY LOST** and go on to protect exposed property based on the most dangerous direction of fire spread. Do not continue to operate in positions that are essentially lost.
- 5.8. The basic variables relating to attack operations involve:
 - 5.8.1. Location/position of attack
 - 5.8.2. Size of attack
 - 5.8.3. Support functions
- 5.9. Command develops an effective attack through the management of these factors.
- 5.10. Command must balance and integrate attack size and position with fire conditions, risk, and resources.
- 5.11. Many times offensive/defensive conditions are clear cut and Command can quickly determine the appropriate strategy. In other cases, the situation is MARGINAL and Command may initiate an offensive interior attack, while setting up defensive positions on the exterior.
- 5.12. THE ONLY REASON TO OPERATE IN MARGINAL SITUATIONS IS RESCUE**
- 5.13. The effect of the interior attack must be constantly evaluated, and the attack abandoned if necessary.
- 5.14. Strategy changes can develop almost instantly or can take considerable time. Command must match the strategy with the conditions. The Incident Commander controls overall incident scene safety by determining the proper strategy to be used.
- 5.15. Command should abandon marginal attacks when:
 - 5.15.1. A primary all clear is obtained from rescue teams.
 - 5.15.2. The roof is unsafe or untenable. Especially working fires in large unsupported, or lightweight trussed attic spaces.
 - 5.15.3. Interior forces encounter heavy heat and cannot locate the fire or cannot make any progress on the fire.

Initial Approval: July 2008 Revision Date:	Page 3 of 4	Don Huber, Fire Chief ORIGINAL SIGNED
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Campbell County Fire Department Standard Operating Procedure		
Operations	Fireground Strategy	401.02

5.16. Command needs to constantly evaluate conditions while operating in marginal situations. This requires frequent and detailed reports from Sector Officers.

6. Defensive Strategy:

- 6.1. The decision to operate in a defensive strategy indicates that the offensive attack strategy, or the potential for one, has been abandoned for reasons of personnel safety, and the involved structure has been conceded as lost
- 6.2. The announcement of a change to a defensive strategy will be made as Emergency Traffic and all personnel will withdraw from the structure *AND MAINTAIN A SAFE DISTANCE FROM THE BUILDING*. Company Officers will account for their crews and advise Command of the status of the crews assigned to their sector.
- 6.3. Interior lines will be withdrawn and repositioned when changing to a defensive strategy.
- 6.4. Crews should retreat with their hose lines if safe to do so. If retreat is being delayed because of hose lines, and it's unsafe to stay in the building, hose lines should be abandoned.
- 6.5. All exposures, both immediate and anticipated, must be identified and protected. The first priority in defensive operations is personnel safety; the second is exposure protection.
- 6.6. Once exposure protection is established, attention may be directed to knocking down the main body of fire.
- 6.7. When the exposure is severe and water is limited, the most effective tactic is to put water on the exposure and, if need be, from the interior of the exposure.
- 6.8. Fire under control means the forward progress of the fire has been stopped and the remaining fire can be extinguished with the on-scene resources; it does not mean the fire is completely out.
- 6.9. When the fire is brought under control, Command will notify SO Dispatch utilizing the standard radio report of "FIRE UNDER CONTROL." SO Dispatch will record the time of this report.