



Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

POST INCIDENT ANALYSIS

**12695 Monnier Court
Mount Airy, Md.**

February 26, 2012



High Risk Low Frequency- Mutual Aid Mayday

**Submitted by
Battalion Chief Shane Darwick**

Introduction

February 26, 2012 at 1421 hours Montgomery County Fire and Rescue units responded to 12695 Monnier Court Mount Airy, Md. for a house fire. Temperature at the time of the fire was 46 degrees, clear skies wind was blowing at 5 MPH from the West.

Frederick County Fire Rescue Engine 254 arrived and laid a line up into the court and reported a one story single family dwelling with heavy smoke and fire showing from the basement extending to the first floor side "D" (Delta). Frederick County Chief 15 established Command and requested a Rapid Intervention Dispatch and Water Supply Task Force. An aggressive attack was commenced by the Frederick County units on scene. Crews quickly searched for occupants neighbors reported no one was home.

During the incident operations, a MAYDAY was declared because one of our Montgomery County personnel fell through the floor with one leg and was temporarily immobile and attempted to self-rescue but was unable to do so. The Montgomery County crew that was operating as a team immediately came to the rescue and held onto the trapped Montgomery County personnel. A MAYDAY was declared and the individual was successfully removed and unharmed; a medical evaluation proved there were no apparent injuries, PPE and SCBA was evaluated and rendered safe to use.

The Fire Investigators determined the fire to be unintentional. The fires origin was in the C/D corner of the basement. The investigation focused on the cause being an electrical outlet that had a power strip plugged into it, which had a vintage video game plugged into the power strip.

Red Cross was requested for occupants that had been displaced.

Loss was estimated to be \$250,000 damage to the structure and \$100,000 to the contents.

The Mayday Event

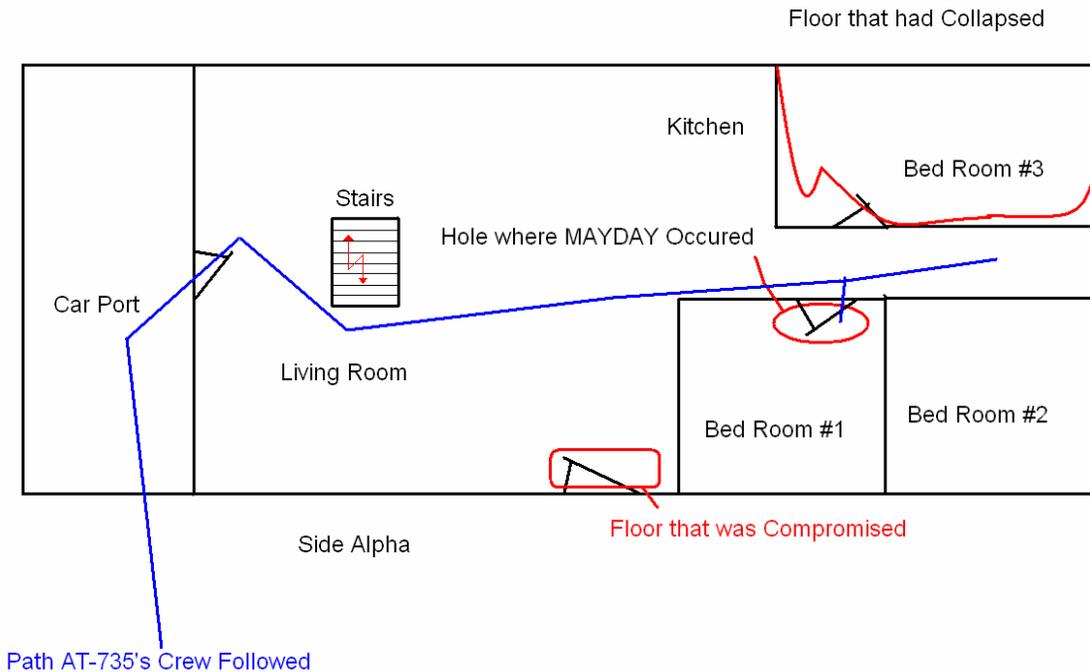
The Mayday event occurred at 1502 hours. The incident was in the post fire overhaul stage. AT735 was initially assigned to stage on side Alpha and then directed by command to evaluate floor conditions and extinguish spot fires. During the units response the OIC of AT735 heard the order to evacuate the structure and begin a defensive attack. He also heard that a report was given to command that the first floor had collapsed in the rear of the structure. AT735's crew reported to side A in which Frederick County Chief 15 was in command. AT735 stood by until ordered to enter the structure to extinguish the pockets of fire that the exterior hose crews could not get water on. AT735's crew entered the house from the door on side Bravo. The crew checked the floor as they proceeded in and was told by command to stay away from the rear of the house. Once inside, the crew made their way down the hall to the bedrooms in quadrant D. When the OIC of AT735 opened the door to the bedroom closet he found fire burning in the wall closet near the front door. He asked for a hand line, a FF passed one up to him, and he knocked down the fire in that room. After he

knocked down the fire in the wall, he walked towards that wall to pull the remaining drywall. When he took his next step, his right leg fell through the floor and up to his hip. He tried to lift himself out for a few minutes then realized he could not do so. He did not want to crawl to his right because he thought he might have fallen completely through the floor into the basement. He yelled for his crew to help him then notified command he had fallen through the floor in the front bedroom. The crewmember assisting looked down the hallway and saw another fire fighter. He told him they had a fire fighter through the floor and to call a mayday. A mayday was declared by AT923 for AT735; the crew reported to his location and assisted him out of the hole in the floor but, they had difficulty because his SCBA was catching on the doorframe, the OIC came free and they stood him up.

The MAYDAY was cancelled and they all exited the building through the door on side Bravo. Battalion 705 assigned RIT Supervisor, immediately made contact with AT735's crew to check on injuries and any other issues. EMS was called to side Bravo to evaluate the crew of AT735.

During an interview with the OIC of AT735 he did not know that any of the flooring in the front side of the structure had been compromised before their entry. He thought the floor in the rear of the structure had collapsed. From the exterior of the building, it appeared that most of the damage was in the rear of the structure.

Command knew the fire in the basement was knocked before they sent them in the structure.



Building Structure/Site Layout

The structure is a single story rancher with a walkout basement (on side D). The house was built in 1974 and is a Type 5 (wood frame) construction. There is approximately 1,874 square feet of living space in this structure.

Occupants were not at home at the time of the fire.

Communications

- The Emergency Communications Center (ECC) dispatcher assigned 9 E (Echo) TAC 30 as the operations talk group
- 9 E TAC 30 could not be heard in route by many of the units responding getting an “Out Of Range” bonk.
- Water supply operations used 9F TAC 31
- There was some confusion on the radio about the Mayday. The Mayday announcement was initially weak but somewhat readable and most people heard it but some did not.
- During the Mayday Event. Command acknowledged the Mayday and Command, switched Operations to 9F TAC 31, and left the Mayday and Rapid Intervention Crews on 9E TAC30.
- Fire ground talk groups were adequate and utilized fully once established.

On Scene Operations

- Structural integrity, based on fire conditions on arrival, was somewhat compromised. The fire was coming from the basement entrance side D (Delta) of the house with auto extension into the first floor and attic space.
- Initial command was identified on arrival by Frederick County Chief 15 and then C717 arrived and assisted in the Command Post. BC705 arrived reported to Command Post completed a face to face with Command (Chief 15) received briefing and was assigned Rapid Intervention Supervisor.
- Strategy/action plan was to confine the fire and search for possible victims.
- Crews executed tactics very effectively. First arriving companies commenced an aggressive attack. Frederick County T23's crew immediately began to throw ladders and vent the roof. Crews quickly searched and reported neighbors reported no one home.
- Standard Operating Procedures were used; and they were adequate.
- Crews executed tactics very effectively positioning attack lines to protect the search and confine the fire.
- Command went from offensive to defensive operations by notifying communications to sound alert tones and announced defensive operation over the radio.

- Apparatus positioning in front (Side A) in the court was adequate the Engine and truck had good position and water supply established at the beginning of the court.
- Attack line selection of 1 3/4" for the initial attack was appropriately used and provided quick maneuverability.
- Water supply was adequate and developed with the assistance of a Water Supply Task Force. There are no hydrants in close proximity to Side "A".

Timeline

- 1418 Time of Dispatch
- 1425 1st Unit on the Scene (ET254)
- 1430 1st Evacuation
- 1440 Noted that personnel were still on the 1st floor
- 1445 Began interior attack in basement
- 1451 2nd Evacuation
- 1456 AT735 Entered to Recon 1st Floor
- 1502 **MAYDAY CALLED BY AT923 for AT735**
- 1505 Mayday Cleared

Tactical Worksheet

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STRATEGIES	ALARM DATA	UTILITIES	RESCUE	POSITION	TIME	LOCATION	DISPATCHED UNITS
Offense	Date: Incident No.	ELECTRIC	MODE	COMMAND POST			Unit
Defensive	Date Time: Com Des.		<input type="checkbox"/> CALLED	OPERATIONS			
CHANGES	Address: Com Des.	GAS	<input type="checkbox"/> CALLED	SAFETY			E
Rescue	Occupancy:		<input type="checkbox"/> OFF	INFORMATION			E
Exposures	PARS		<input type="checkbox"/> ALL CLEAR	UNIFORM			E
Confine/ent		Incident Commander		STAGING			E
Sequencing				PLANS			E
Overhaul				LOGISTICS			E
Ventilation				FINANCE/ADMIN			E
Salvage							E
SUPPORT							T
Water Supply							T
Medical Unit Leader							T
Alarm Personnel							T
Staging							RS
Rehab							
Pre-Plans/Maps							
SPECIALTY							
Command Unit							41
Hazmat Unit							735
Specialty Unit							153
Technical Rescue							154
Helicopter							254
Swift Water Rescue							T23
USAR							8171
SERVICE							154
HAZARDOUS (CROSS)							44
Police							709
Fire							233
Public Works							T1
Private Contractors							
Heavy Equipment							
Trucks							
NOTIFICATIONS							
Investigator							
Sanity Officer							
Building Inspector							
Medical Inspector							
Health Inspector							
UTILITIES							
Gas Company							
Power Company							
Telephone Co.							
Water Utilities							
WELFARE							
Canteen							
Red Cross							
Chaplain							
Police							
Shelter							
Portable Ladders							

Units in Rehab	Units in Staging	Revised 11/07	WEATHER CONDITIONS
754	754		TIME
259	H44		WIND DIRECTION
755	T23		WIND SPEED
254	153		TEMPERATURE
H44	259		
CH2	254		
709	709		
713			

Staging

- Site Access was close to scene and could handle the apparatus from several directions.

Support Functions

- Rehab established on Side "A" across the street.
- Fire/Rescue personnel were provided with food and drinks by Canteen.
- Crews were relieved by fresh crews throughout.
- There were no equipment or apparatus failures reported.

Safety

- Safety 700 was called to the scene to assist with the investigation of a possible injury of an MCFR employee. Safety 700 completed an evaluation of PPE and SCBA was rendered safe and serviceable.
- There were no fire/rescue personnel injured.
- There was a Rapid Intervention Dispatch
- BC705 was assigned as RIG Supervisor E713, and Frederick County E171 assembled on side A and staged equipment.

Accountability

- Command ensured actions were taken for accurate personnel accountability by checking with Division Supervisors operating within the structure, what task were being performed and which units were with them..
- The status of units, Divisions/Groups and support personnel were maintained throughout the incident.
- The incident continuously controlled and monitored by Command.

Investigations

- The fire origin was the basement.
- The Fire Investigators determined the fire to be unintentional.
- The fire's origin was in the C/D corner of the basement. The investigation focused on the cause being an electrical outlet that had a power strip plugged into it, which had a vintage video game plugged into it.

Lessons Learned

- Crew integrity was critical because the personnel stayed together and were able to immediately react and come to the aid of the MAYDAY individual.
- Montgomery's transition to the third due engine being RIT aligned with Frederick's and that of our mutual aid partner's is a critical part of having a dedicated RIT early in the incident.
- Montgomery County PPE specifications are sound and aid in protecting our personnel while engaged in the interior fire environment personnel are subjected to.

Pictures



Floor joist looking up from basement.



Hole in first floor looking up from the basement.



Hole in floor looking from first floor into basement.

Montgomery County Units on Incident

FC	DC700	BC705	Safety 700
PE713	AT735	PRE709	C717
W709	PE735	C709	