

Running head: FIREFIGHTERS RISKING THEIR LIVES TO SAVE PROPERTIES

FIREFIGHTERS RISKING THEIR LIVES TO SAVE DISPOSABLE PROPERTIES

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CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Albert Smith". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Signed: _____

Abstract

Akron Fire Department's firefighters have experienced an increase in the number of calls to abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties (AVUP) over the last year. There have been a high number of arson fires, interior structural components are being compromised, holes cut in the floors, windows and doors are boarded-up. All of these issues have delayed fire response. The department has also seen a higher number of house gas explosions and fully involved house fires. The issue is why are firefighters willing to risk their lives to save disposable properties. If these types of runs are not handled properly, they can cause injury or death. The purpose of this paper was to determine why the offensive fire mode is the fire mode of choice in AVUP. The research questions that were used in this paper are: what are firefighters concerns when making the fire mode decision at abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties? What are other fire department's standard operating procedures (SOP) and standard operating guidelines (SOG) at abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties? What is needed to assist firefighters in making the correct decision at abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties? The research method that was used is the descriptive method. This research examined past events at vacant units to understand how to handle and reduce future hazards. This research reviewed internet search engines, articles in local newspapers and surveys. Research results have shown that most firefighter's deaths occurred in AVUP when there was no one inside when fire companies arrived. However, they still used an offensive fire attack to save disposable property. Based on this research it is recommended that departments need to create an AVUP awareness program to increase firefighter's awareness at AVUP. Firefighters have to realize that their lives are more valuable than disposable property.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years Akron Fire Department's firefighters have experienced an increase in the number of abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties (AVUP) incidents. Fires in AVUP have created additional arson related hazards for Akron Department's firefighters. Some of the hazards created by AVUP are: multiple fires at same locations, multiple house fires at the same time, burned out structural members, gas leaks, an increasing number of house explosions that have been caused by gas leaks and vandalized properties and an increase in involved house fires. Because some of the AVUP are boarded- up, hidden fires can burn a long time before being noticed and reported. These hidden fires lead time has affected the structural integrity of the property before the fire companies' arrival. Other hazards found in these AVUP are methamphetamine labs. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), data link shows that Summit County

is the "Meth Capital of Ohio" and ranks third worst in the nation for the drug. The county has 102 methamphetamine (86 of which are [sic] in Akron) sites listed on the DEA's online National Clandestine Laboratory Register, trailing only two other counties in the country. (Wikipedia, 2008, p. 3 & 4)

The research paper problem statement is why firefighters are willing to risk their life to save disposable properties. Because of the increasing number of residential AVUP, more firefighters are being forced to make the decision on where to draw the line between their lives and property conservation. The wrong decision can cause serious injury or death to the responding firefighters.

The purpose of this research paper is to determine why the offensive fire mode is the fire mode of choice in AVUP. The research questions that will be used to understand the problem are:

1. What are firefighters' concerns when making the fire mode decision at abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties?
2. What are other fire departments' SOP and SOG at abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties?
3. What is needed to assist firefighters in making the correct decision at abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties?

This paper will use the descriptive method to examine current and past fire ground operations. It will also examine the increasing number of vacant properties in the community.

This topic was selected because of my personal concerns about the increasing number of AVUP in the Akron area and the number of firefighters that die in the line of duty each year in these types of properties. AVUP are starting to force fire departments across the country to rethink how they handle these types of fire related incidents. Fire departments that continue to do business as usual in AVUP are exposing their firefighters to hazards that can and will cause serious injuries and at times, death.

BACKGROUND & SIGNIFICANCE

The city of Akron, Ohio is 62.41 square miles and was founded in 1825. The city is located thirty five miles south of Cleveland, next to the Ohio-Erie Canal. "Akron was the fastest growing city in America during the 19-teens and 20's. The rubber industry attracted people from

all over the world. From 1910 to 1920, Akron's population went from 69,000 to 210,000". (City Of Akron, p. 1). The name Akron is derived from the Greek word that means high. The population in the Akron area peaked in the 1960's, and started to decline in the 1970's. Currently the estimated population based on the 2006 census estimate is around 197,950 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2006, p. 2). Akron was once called the Rubber Capital of the World, and is now a world-renowned center for polymer research and development. This once great industrial and service-based community has slowly started changing into a white collar high technical college community. Akron's housing stock that was created to handle the population growth during the city's peak population has created a high number of unneeded vacant and abandoned units. Based on the U. S. Census Bureau American Fact finder report in 2000, there were 97,315 total housing units. However, there were 90,116 occupied units and 7,199 vacant units in the city. In U. S. Census Bureau American Fact finder report in 2006 there were 98,634 total housing units there were 85,407 occupied units and 13,227 vacant units in the city. During the same time period the population dropped from 217,074 to an estimated 197,950. (U. S. Census Bureau, 2006, p. 1 &2) & (U. S. Census Bureau, 2000, p. 1). The city's population growth chart can be found in Appendix A

Since the estimated population has dropped below 200,000 people, the demand for the current inner city housing stock has declined. Currently people who are moving into the Akron area, on the average, have higher paying jobs and purchase properties in the outlying areas and surrounding suburbs.

The city demolishes an average of 346 properties per year. Since 1999 the city has demolished approximately 2765 housing units. The chart can be found in Appendix B. This shift

in the city's population, job losses and the mortgage crisis, have created residential vacant property issues in our community.

If you think you've been hearing the wail of fire engine sirens a lot more often in the last month and a half, you could be right. In January, the Akron Fire Department responded to 51 fires at houses and other buildings. That was the most structure fires reported in Akron in a January in five years. (Chancellor, 2007, p. 1)

Based on the Akron Fire Department's Fire Reports HTE Data Base System, comparison between the number of house fire between 2007 and 2008, on an average there have been more vacant house fires every month except for July between 2007 and 2008. The comparison chart for vacant building fires between 2007 and 2008 can be found in Appendix C.

This research ties directly to the Community Risk Reduction topic of the Executive Fire Officer second year course outline. AVUP's are not only a fire department issue. These properties are health and safety problem for the whole community. Local governments, businesses and residents of the community are starting to take a hard look at how to reduce the number of AVOP in their neighborhoods. "Summit County Council moved to make initial appointments to the recently established Summit County Abandoned and Vacant Property Task Force". (Falkerth, 2008, p. 1)

Akron Ohio is the largest city in Summit County. The increases in vacant units are driving the property values down. These properties are reducing the tax base that is needed to support essential city functions and school revenues. An article in the Akron Beacon Journal on May, 2008, "Chances are if you are an Akron homeowner looking to sell, you have a certain

sinking feeling. That would be the value of your home dropping by more than 13 percent compared to a year ago”. (Akron Beacon Journal, 2008, p. A1)

Another study show that AVUP are a drain on the community resources, they require community time, and attention. However, they produce no or little property tax to help off-set their cost to the community.

A study in Austin, Texas found that “blocks with unsecured [vacant] buildings had 3.2 times as many drug calls to police, 1.8 times as many theft calls, and twice the number of violent calls” as blocks without vacant buildings. More than 12,000 fires break out in vacant structures each year in the US, resulting in \$73 million in property damage annually. Most are the result of arson. (National Vacant Properties Campaign, 2005, p. 1)

A chart showing the impact of vacant and abandoned units can be found in Appendix D.

The five year operational objectives of the United States Fire Administration (USFA) are to reduce the loss of life from fire-related hazards by 15 percent by doing the following:

Reducing by 25 percent the loss of life of the age group 14 years and below.

Reducing by 25 percent the loss of life of the age group 65 years and above.

Reducing by 25 percent the loss of firefighters' lives.

Providing 2,500 communities with a comprehensive multi-hazard risk reduction plan led by or including the local fire service.

Responding appropriately in a timely manner to emergent issues”. (Burriss, 2001)

This paper will focus on the third, fourth and fifth objectives. The primary goal is to reduce the loss of firefighters’ lives. However, this will require a comprehensive multi-hazard

risk reduction plan that will include the local fire service and other local government and community based groups working together on this AVUP issue.

One of the goals of this research paper is to examine how fire departments are handling the AVUP issue, to help reduce future firefighter's injuries and deaths. On an average, 15 firefighters are killed at AVUP incidents in the United States each year. During most of these fire incidents' firefighters knew that there was no one in the property. However, they still used an offensive fire attack to save disposable property. Firefighters have to learn from past events at AVUP in order to ensure a safer future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Usually firefighters enter burning structures with two goals, to save lives and to preserve property. On April 04, 2008, two firefighters died in Colerain, Ohio. The Colerain Fire Department's Official stated that when the first engine company arrived, the captain on the first engine company spoke to the homeowners and was told there was no one inside. The fire officer was told that the fire was in the basement. The officers' last transmission indicated that the firefighters were going down to the basement (Colerain Township, 2008). At this time the officer knew that there was no one in the property. However, the fire attack seems to be the same as if there were someone in the property. This fire officer chose to use an offensive fire attack on a heavily involved house fire. At this fire incident, most of the items in the property will be replaced. However, the two firefighter's lives cannot be replaced. So why do firefighters continue to risk their lives to save disposable property?

When trying to understand the effects that have been caused by the increasing number of vacant properties in my community, this researcher began to examine the arson related hazards, the increase in AVUP and different fire departments' SOPs and SOGs. However, the real

problem I discovered is not the increases in the vacant properties. The real problem is why are firefighters willing to risk their lives to save disposable property. “Of the 20 to 30 firefighters killed annually inside burning structures, the vast majority died in structures where no life hazard was present at ignition of the fire, let alone on the arrival of the first-in units”. (Coleman, 2004, p. 1)

So what do firefighters base their decision on when making the fire attack mode decision?

Most fire professionals miss the point in that the reasons firefighters are dying in structure fires are poor size-up (initial and ongoing) and tactics. These are the only two reasons... The only policy that truly needs to be addressed is training—training for scene commanders in dealing with size-up and general tactics and training for fire crews to recognize hazards and situations the scene commanders do not recognize. I think the "brave" fire service owes it to its citizens to safely (relative to our jobs) save as much property as possible. We also owe it to our firefighters to train them in strategy and tactics a lot more than we do. A well-involved structure should not be entered: This should be a commonsense approach after size-up and tactical considerations” (Bucy, 2004, p. 1)

When casually talking to co-workers about AVUP, I started to get different responses based on what my co-worker's definition was for the different type of properties. The definition for vacant property seems easy, but it drives how firefighter’s fire ground decisions are made at AVUP. If firefighters do not separate these types of properties from how they deal with occupied properties, they are exposing themselves to unnecessary hazards.

To understand why firefighters are risking their lives to save disposable properties, it is important to understand their definition for AVUP. A definition that the National Underwriter

Company uses is “devoid of occupants or contents”. (The National Underwriter Company, p. 1)

Based on this definition a vacant and unoccupied property would be considered the same. If utilities are left on, in most cases the property is considered unoccupied and not vacant. In Fire Engineer magazine, one of the topics that was discussed was:

The risk analysis and fighting fires in unoccupied or vacant buildings. Before presenting our answers, let's look at a few definitions to make sure we are all singing off the same song sheet. To me, an unoccupied building is one with contents but no humans inside at the time of the fire. A closed convenience store in a strip mall at 5 a.m. would be an example of an unoccupied building. So would a house whose occupants are away on vacation. A vacant building is one with no (or only a few worthless) contents inside. An abandoned warehouse, factory, or house would be an example of a vacant building.”

(Coleman, 2004, p. 1)

The National Vacant Properties Campaign (NVPC) defines vacant properties

as residential, commercial, and industrial buildings and vacant lots that exhibit one or both of the following traits: The site poses a threat to public safety (meeting the definition of a public nuisance), or The owners or managers neglect the fundamental duties of property ownership (e.g., they fail to pay taxes or utility bills, default on mortgages, or carry liens against the property). (National Vacant Properties Campaign, 2005, p. 4)

The Ohio Fire Codes definition for abandoned premises is:

Building, structures and premises for which an owner cannot be identified or located by dispatch of a certificate of mailing to last known or registered address, which persistently or repeatedly become unprotected or unsecured, which have been occupied by unauthorized persons or for illegal purposes, or which present a danger of structural

collapse or fire spread to adjacent properties shall be considered abandoned, declared unsafe and abated by demolition or rehabilitation in accordance with the International Property Maintenance Code and building code as listed in rule 1301:7-7-45 of the Administrative Code. (Ohio Fire Code, 2007, p. 50)

The first 22 questions on a survey given to local firefighters, dealt with what firefighters considered to be an abandoned, vacant or unoccupied property. There were questions to determine how firefighters decide when to enter an AVUP.

Saturday November 15, 2008, by the accounts of men who battled the blaze alongside Harris, the fire was as routine as they get in Detroit -- a blaze in a decrepit and empty house in a city with more than 60,000 vacant dwellings. The fire -- in an abandoned blue and green bungalow at East Kirby and Sheridan with an arson reward poster tacked to the door and cans of juice and beans sitting unopened on the dining room table -- was put under control in a matter of minutes. But, this being Detroit, the firefighters went into the wood-framed dwelling and continued up to the second floor to look for victims and to extinguish any remnant embers. In this part of the city, crumbling houses are often occupied by drug addicts, the homeless and even families with children struggling to survive. This time, there was nobody home. Someone heard timber snap. And then the roof collapsed. (LeDuff, 2008, p. 1)

A key statement is “this being Detroit”. (LeDuff, 2008, p. 1) Firefighter Harris died on November 15, 2008 after entering a wood-framed dwelling. This property had two arson warning signs posted on the outside doors. So is it size-up or traditions that guide firefighter decisions? Two thirds of the firefighters I surveyed stated tradition, and because there are no SOPs and SOGs, as why they still use an offense fire attack on AVUP.

Another study examined the importance of strategy and tactics.

The study also determined the degree of safety provided by the strategy and tactics used during these operations. The analysis considered structural fire firefighter fatalities from January 1, 1990, through December 31, 2006. The study found that 187 or 87 percent of the firefighter fatalities occurred in an enclosed structure ... In all cases, an aggressive interior attack was used. The analysis concluded that, over a 16-year time span, firefighters using an aggressive interior attack in enclosed structures died far more often... it is important that departments act to prevent additional firefighter deaths by adopting and implementing more appropriate enclosed structure tactics and Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) for use during extremely dangerous enclosed structure fires. (FEMA, 2008, p. 18)

Below is the FEMA table 15 that shows the number of firefighter deaths in residential occupancies for the past 10 years. Based on NFPA national estimates, are shown below.

Firefighter Ages and Nature of Fatal Injury

Year	Number of Firefighter Deaths
2007	15
2006	15
2005	18
2004	15
2003	10
2002	21
2001	17
2000	21
1999	23
1998	17

(FEMA, 2008, p. 25)

The second question is: How are other fire departments dealing with vacant residential properties fire related hazards? Akron Fire Department is not the only department that has seen an increase in vacant fire related hazards. Fire departments across the country are dealing with vacant properties in their community. Many fire departments have established standard operating procedure to specifically govern fire ground operations at abandoned, vacant and unoccupied buildings. In Flint, Michigan it was found

that firefighters were initiating interior attacks to attempt to save abandoned buildings that had been previously condemned for demolition by building inspectors. An aggressive interior operation aimed at property conservation of abandoned buildings was conclusively found to be a very dangerous exercise in futility. (Graves, 2007, p.1)

What are the legal effects if fire departments decide to make SOP or SOG fire mode of operational changes? Firefighters and departments have expressed concerns that the cities and individual firefighters could be sued in cases of defensive mode operations at structure fires. Legal issues of concern are the possibility that a civilian may still be in the building and the additional loss of property value to the property owner. A law suit that was decided in a

Minnesota case of *Dahlheimer v. City of Dayton* (1989), a property owner alleged that the City's firefighters were grossly negligent in fighting a barn fire. Fire tactics began as offensive operations and then switched to defensive operations. The barn was destroyed. The court ruled that: "It is inappropriate for a jury or court to second-guess a complicated decision made during a fire because it would submit the tactical decisions of fire chiefs to the monetary and psychological threats of litigation. (Graves, 2007, p. 12)

In a lawsuit where the firefighter's wife filed a lawsuit against the city, because of the action of her husband:

They rushed into that building and put their lives on the line after they heard people may have been in there, Mr. Pineiro said of the firefighters ... Mr. O'Keefe said a civil action against the city by his client is highly unlikely. Why would the city be liable? he said.

They're a well-trained department, and they know what they're doing. (Sutner, 2000, p. 1)

The next lawsuit examined the action of the incident commander. The commander's actions received negative reviews, but the lawsuit stated his action still fell under the qualified immunity of government officials

The present-day lawsuit likewise pointed to the fire department's...had advance notice of the fatal pattern and practice of SOP violations within the fire department." The trial judge held that firefighters had the right under the U.S. Constitution to be free from "conscience-shocking executive action," and wrote a decision that was quite negative of the fire department's safety practices. But in 2004, the U.S. Court of Appeals in two other cases had written opinions finding "qualified immunity" of government officials.... The Court cautioned, however, that if there is proof of a supervisor's "intentional" disregard of safety issues, then the supervisor could be sued personally for wrongful death and intentional tortious conduct. (Lawrence, 2006, p. 1)

In most fire ground case lawsuits, the court has ruled for the fire departments. However, this does not mean that the fire department's actions were right.

Below is an examination of how other fire departments are handling the vacant properties issues?

You may now be scratching your heads, and saying I must be crazy or possibly even cowardly. But think of my perspective as a fireground commander. The possibility of having a member injured or killed and for what? To save contents of a business. To me, that is not justification for exposing firefighters to unnecessary risks. (LaFemina, 2007, p. 1)

Fire departments and fire ground commanders have to understand and evaluate the risks that they are exposing firefighters to a AVUP. Fire department and fireground commanders have to examine what they are really try to save at AVUP.

The Fire Department of New York established a vacant building fire procedure in 1986. Some excerpts are as follows: Members must psychologically adjust to a “no rush” approach. In these buildings, the life hazard is to the firefighter. A slower, more cautious operation is definitely indicated. The life hazard at vacant building fires is almost solely that of our operating members. It must be stressed; the primary emphasis in vacant building operations is that of exterior attack. (Graves, 2007, p. 13)

The New York Fire Department has taken the no rush policy at vacant building, if the only life hazard is that of the firefighter. This department policy stresses the primary emphasis in vacant building is to use an exterior attack.

The Phoenix Fire Department’s vacant building fire procedure contains the following guideline. A well-involved building would likely represent a zero survivability profile. Similar conditions in an abandoned building would indicate little survivability and little property to be saved and members should avoid an offensive fire fight. (Graves, 2007, p. 13)

The Phoenix Fire Department also feels that in a well-involved vacant building fire

offensive fire fighting should be avoided

The Jonesboro Fire Department in Arkansas established an extensive philosophy of firefighting in their S.O.P.s, which include the following excerpts. In the JFD and the fire service in general, we pride ourselves on being very aggressive interior firefighters and look down on those that fight fire from the street. However, there is a fine line between aggressive and careless firefighting. It is important to state that we are not advocating all interior attacks as being inappropriate, just those that cross the line of unacceptable risk. In some cases, it is more heroic to not make an interior attack because that officer is placing the safety of their crew first, rather than feeling compelled to take an unnecessary risk” (Graves, 2007, p. 13)

The Jonesboro Fire department states it is ok to be aggressive, if you don't cross the line of unacceptable risk. Sometimes it is more heroic not to make an internal attack.

The Fulton County Fire Department in Georgia set forth the following in their vacant building fire procedure. “No property is worth the life of a member of the Fire Department”. (Graves, 2007, p. 13) Their policy goes on and states that “No level of risk to responders is acceptable in situations where there is no potential to save lives or property”. (Graves, 2007, p. 13) So is property worth the risk to members of their department?

The last question is, what is needed to assist fighters in making the correct decision at abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties? Departments need to establish clear guidelines on how to handle these types of incidents. Training is needed on how to properly size-up and fire ground tactics. Departments need to work on their tradition concepts. To reduce firefighters' hazards and assist firefighters with making the correct fire ground decision, departments must first take a look at their current SOPs and their SOGs. The fire departments mentioned above

have made adjustments to their SOPs and SOGs, in most cases recommending a slow approach. According to the Flint Fire Department SOG, "Interior attacks should not be initiated unless there is a known life in jeopardy or unless fires conditions are incipient or minimal and structural and hazard conditions permit safe entry." (Thompson, 2007, p. 1)

Departments need to work on risk vs. reward mindset. If the risk is not worth the reward, then adjust your fire tactics.

Josh Thompson, battalion chief, Avon (IN) Fire Department, An "unoccupied" building could mean many things: a vacant and condemned building, a closed business, a structure under construction, or a house whose occupants are absent. Our department has no specific policy regarding "unoccupied" building fires, but I have a philosophy as the incident commander (IC) on such incidents. Most of us have heard it before and use it every day, but do we use it effectively? Evaluation of the risk vs. reward. What risk should we take for what reward? Our job is risky. At times, we thrive and contribute to the risk. We cannot allow this type of mentality to continue to injure and kill us. On the other hand, we shouldn't let every "unoccupied" building burn down because it is too risky. (Thompson J. , 2004, p. 1)

Danny Kistner, battalion chief, Garland (TX) Fire Department:

In situations where fire has progressed beyond the incipient stage, several variables must be addressed when evaluating a strategy: What is the risk/benefit of an aggressive fire attack? Do we have enough personnel on-scene to satisfy two in/two out? What are the condition and color of the smoke? What will conditions be like in the next minute? Two minutes? Five minutes? Is this a building with which we are familiar? (Kistner, 2004, p. 1)

Rick Lasky, chief, Lewisville (TX) Fire Department response:

Our department's SOP regarding fire attack in an unoccupied building is a fairly simple one. Actually, we borrowed it from Phoenix, Arizona: We will risk our lives a lot, in a highly calculated and controlled manner, to protect a savable human life. We will risk our lives a little, in a highly calculated and controlled manner, to protect savable property. We will not risk our lives at all to protect lives or property that are already lost. (Lasky, 2004, p. 1)

In Toledo, they have a vacant building where the building seem to be structurally unsound.

Our city building department puts these buildings on a demolition list. Once a building is placed on this list, we are notified and send an inspector to view the property. If we concur, we send a registered letter to the property owner informing him that we will not conduct interior firefighting in this property except for a "known rescue" (procedure states "unless we arrive and see or hear a victim inside"). Our Law Department has approved this policy. The policy includes an appeals process for the property owner (it has yet to be used). We call these buildings "Code Red" buildings. The address is flagged in our computer-aided dispatch system. If that address comes up for a structure fire call, units are notified during the dispatch that this building is "Code Red." Only exterior operations will be conducted once we are on-scene. Each Code Red building is placarded on at least two sides with a fluorescent sign to inform the crews should the fire call be turned in without a specific address. (Coleman, 2004, p. 1)

The vacant property issue is larger than any one fire department. Fire departments need to work with other fire departments, agencies and local government and community organization to help develop safe fire ground to reduce the number of vacant units in their community.

In July 2000 Mayor Gerald D. Jennings signed into law an ordinance creating the Albany Vacant Building Registry. The Registry was instituted to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public by establishing a registration process for vacant buildings. The process requires responsible parties to implement a maintenance plan for such buildings in order to remedy any public nuisance problems and prevent deterioration, unsightly blight, and consequent adverse impact on the value of nearby property”. (The United State Conference of Mayors, 2006, p. 10)

The appointment of task forces made up of community leaders helps to create regulations on how to monitor, inspect and reduce the number of vacant units in the community. When fire departments work with the local government it helps to provide information back to the on-line officers about the number and the condition of AVUP in their area. When fire companies start to inspect and assist pre-fire ground rating of these types of properties, it will assist with the on scene fire ground size-up and fire ground decisions.

Most of the firefighters I spoke with were not aware that the Ohio Fire Codes 311.1 to 311.5 required that unsafe, abandoned buildings must have placard installed with an entry determination rating. However, this code does not say who is responsible for placard, installing and inspecting these structures. (Ohio Fire Code, 2007, p. 50)

What is needed to guide firefighters in making the correct decision at abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties? It is important that firefighters understand the risk vs. reward factors. It is important for firefighters to view abandoned, vacant and unoccupied units differently from occupied units. It is also important for fire departments to understand that the vacant properties issues are a community wide problem. This problem needs to be addressed with many different tools. Some of the tools include a task force made up of community leaders who have the ability to change and create new regulations. Departments need to review current operating procedures and adjust them for AVUP. Fire departments need to use current laws that regulate inspections, placard, and monitoring properties in their community. It is important that firefighters remember that their lives rank higher than property conservation.

PROCEDURES

Internet search engines, National Fire Academy (NFA) Learning Research Center staff (LRC) staff, personal surveys of local area firefighters and community leaders were used to answer the following research questions.

Local articles and Internet search engines were used to get a past, current and future understanding of this issue. Local articles were used to show the direct relationship of the vacant properties problems on the Akron Firefighters Department. The Internet articles were used to show past history, what other departments are doing and to get ideas on how to assist firefighters in how to select the proper fire attack mode and ways they can reduce hazards they face at AVUP.

Surveys were created using SurveyMonkey.com to get a better understanding of how firefighters and the community view the vacant property issues in the community.

The two surveys were designed to cover three research questions. The first part of the firefighter's survey (22 questions) was designed to cover question number one, what do firefighters consider to be a vacant residential property? Firefighter's survey numbers 23, 24, 28, 33, 37 and number 38 were designed to cover city and other department activities. The remaining questions were designed to get a better understanding on how to reduce fire fighter's hazards at these types of incidents. These surveys were designed to be replicated by other researchers. One survey was created to get firefighters opinions. There were 48 questions on the local firefighter survey. The firefighter's survey started off by trying to get an understanding of how firefighters view abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties. Then questions were designed to get an understanding of how and when firefighters make the determination to enter abandoned, vacant or unoccupied properties. Then questions were used to see if they felt that the department has provided the necessary tools they needed to safely handle these types of incidents. There were questions that asked if they felt the current SOP and SOG needed to be adjusted to create a different SOP or SOG for AVUP. Then there were questions about their awareness of what the city and other fire departments are doing to handle these types of properties. There were questions on who should be responsible for creating these policies for AVUP. Should these abandoned properties be demolished after three years? There was a question asking if fully involved abandoned properties should be allowed to burn to the ground. There were 40 surveys that were totally completed out of 46 surveys. The firefighters rank breakdowns were 10 firefighters, 16 Lieutenants, 9 Captains, 3 District Chiefs, 1 Deputy Chief and 2 other. The total survey and the different ranks breakdown surveys can be found in Appendix D. There was a 15 question survey created to get a view of how local community leaders, local governments and local non-profit organizations felt about the increasing number of abandoned, vacant and

unoccupied properties. Eleven community leaders out of 30 returned their surveys. Questions on the community survey asked if they felt vacant properties are an issue, what is being done by the local government, and who should be on a committee to deal with the vacant unit issues in the community. Thirty surveys were E-mailed to community leaders I used the SurveyMonkey.com program to design, collect and analyze the surveys.

Research paper limitations that affected this paper were getting people to complete the surveys in a timely manner. Firefighters were given eight days to complete the 15 minutes survey and the community members were given four days to complete the five to seven minute survey. There are many reasons why people do not want to complete surveys. One reason is they feel their answers will not be confidential. Other reasons may be job related activities and not checking their E-mails before the survey deadline. This research asked difficult questions, that some firefighters would not answer because they did not want other people to judge their opinions about this topic. The survey results will be sent out to everyone who was asked to complete the surveys. However, surveys are a good way of learning about what people may not be willing to openly discuss. Because of the feedback on the survey questions, I was able to gain some insight on how some firefighters and community residents felt about this topic.

RESULTS

The surveys gave an insight into how local fire firefighters view different vacant properties concerns. The first firefighters' survey question asked what firefighters consider to be a vacant residential property. Question #3 asked is an abandoned and vacant house considered the same type of property. 58.7% said no to this question. However, when asked the definition of a vacant and abandoned property, the same definition received the highest percentage. 71.7% chose b. for abandoned, left empty without being maintained. Furthermore, 28.3% also pick the

same definition for vacant property and 32.6% selected a. Left empty on account of not being used or lived in. There were about 23.9% of the firefighters who felt that it did not make a difference if the property was abandoned, vacant or unoccupied. When asked if the department treats abandoned, vacant and unoccupied the same as occupied structural fires, 38.1% said yes. One of the issues is some departments use the same SOP and SOG for vacant and occupied units. Based on my survey to 40 local area firefighters of different ranks, questions 6, 7 and 8, 76.1% felt it was important for firefighters to know and separate the difference between abandoned, vacant or unoccupied properties. Sixty three percent (63%) stated that if they were responding to a house fire with fire and smoke visible on arrival and was told there's no one inside, this would change their fire attack. Seventy six percent (76%) stated that when determining their fire attack, it would not be the same for a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied property. The total survey is in Appendix D.

Rushing into these types of properties can be deadly to firefighters. So what is the determining factor that firefighters use when making the decision to enter a property? In my survey, I asked multiple questions about what is an abandoned, vacant or unoccupied property. The next questions asked why you feel fire departments use offensive attack on abandoned, vacant, or unoccupied properties. The options were tradition, no SOP or SOG, get units back in service; officers to do not consider firefighter risks or all of the above. My survey results came in with tradition at 26.8% and all of the above at 34.1% with no SOP or SOG coming in third at 22.0%. 87.8% felt that properties need to be placard, but felt the building department should be the responsible party. However, 63.4% felt with proper training firefighters should take on the responsibility of inspecting and placard the vacant units in their district. 87.8% felt that the department needs to provide awareness training for abandoned, vacant and unoccupied

properties. There was not that much of a difference between the different rank opinions. Most firefighters felt that fully involved abandoned property should be allowed to burn to the ground. The local government should regulate utilities in vacant units and 61.0% felt that an abandoned property that has not been used for over three years should be demolished. Even though this was a small response, it still gives an insight of how most firefighters feel about this issue. The community survey was a little different. Most felt that vacant units are a major community issue. They felt that it is driving their property values down. When asked who should be responsible, the Health Department was chosen to be the responsible party by 54.5%. When asked to pick only five people or groups to work on a vacant house committee, the top five were the Health Department with 72.7%, Planning Department with 63.6%, Building Department with 54.5%, Non-Profit Groups and Property Owners tied with 54.5%. The Fire Department received 27.3% coming in number ninth on the list tied with Mayor Cabinet. 90.9% felt the vacant units need to be placard and that the city should regulate utilities and 45.5% felt that abandoned properties should be demolished after three years, and 27.3% felt after seven years, 9.1% felt after five years and 18.2% felt that the property should not be demolished.

Articles from the local paper and on the internet show what the city is doing to handle the increasing number of vacant units. The city and county have started to develop a task force of 14 community leaders. The mayor has applied for federal funds to buy, rehabilitate and demolish vacant units. The police department has created Adopt-a-Vacant House Initiative Program. However, it is interesting when asking firefighters if the city is doing anything to deal with the increasing number of vacant properties, 82.9% said no, the city does not have a plan.

The internet articles from the Literature Review cover how some departments have adjusted their SOPs and SOGs when responding to AVUP. Most departments from the Literature

Review felt that AVUP have to be dealt with a different approach. The research paper and articles mention the importance of having clear SOPs and SOGs. These articles also talk about the importance of providing training on how to do a proper size-up at AVUP.

DISCUSSION

Therefore, is life priority the driving reason why firefighters enter AVUP or is it traditions and peer pressure/ Most firefighters realize the hazards when they responded to these types of fire. So are firefighters' fire decision based more on tradition than size-up? Statements such as, "this is how we do it" makes it sound like tradition is one of the factors that firefighters use. Should tradition be added to the firefighter's hazard priority list?

Usually firefighters enter burning structures with two goals, to save lives (life safety) and to preserve property. At the Colerain fire the officer knew that there was no one in the property, so would a SOP or SOG have made a difference? It does not seem that the size-up made the difference, because they knew no one was in the house, there was heavy fire damage, they were the first company on the scene, and they decided to use an offensive fire attack. Therefore the fire attack seems to be the same as if there were someone in the property. When reviewing this run, did the officer consider the life hazard to fire personnel? Maybe the question should be: does it really matter if the unit is vacant, abandoned and unoccupied? What do we really save when we place firefighters' lives at risk when we enter AVUP? One of the topics that were discussed in the Executive Fire Officer class was cost analysis. Do firefighters weigh cost vs. hazards to the firefighter when they decide to enter these types of properties?

The first question, what do firefighters consider to be a vacant residential property, was decided upon because too many times firefighters get locked into the rescue and property conservation mode and forget that their life comes before the property conservation.

Not so long ago, we in the FDNY would think nothing of fighting a fire in a vacant building. Smart? Looking back, no....Were we ever in danger? You bet we were, almost 100 percent of the time. But we disregarded the hazards by creating our own justifications. We'd be trying to keep the fire from extending or using the building as a training ground. In essence, we were doing live-fire burns. I must stress that the commanders at the time were not purposely putting us in danger by fighting these fires this was just the mentality of that time period concerning most structural fires.

(LaFemina, 2007, p. 1)

The Akron Fire Department has a good track record of fighting interior fires. There is no one currently on the Akron Fire Department who was on the job when a firefighter died in the line of duty. When I was at the National Fire Academy in April 2008, and the two firefighters died in Colerain in Ohio, it made me think are we setting ourselves up for the same type of incident in our department. Akron Fire Department has highly motivated and well trained firefighters and fire officers. To date Akron Fire Department has made the right fire ground decisions. However, we also have outlying companies and acting officers that may be on the scene a long time before help arrives. It is currently up to the first arriving officer to assume command and make the correct fire ground decision on when to use an offensive or defense fire mode. There is no SOP or SOG that spells out the difference between abandoned, vacant, unoccupied or occupied property. There may not need to be a new policy created. However, it is important that company officers understand that if there is no one in the property, the only lives being placed at risk are the firefighters. In the second year of Executive Officer class, we talked about risk management. John "Skip" Coleman, Deputy Chief of fire prevention for the Toledo (OH) Department of Fire and Rescue asked "Of the 20 to 30 firefighters killed annually inside

burning structures, the vast majority died in structures where no life hazard was present at ignition of the fire, let alone on the arrival of the first-in units". (COLEMAN, 2004, P. 1)

Too many firefighters are dying unnecessarily trying to save property where there is no value. When I started this paper my focus was only on abandoned and vacant property. But as I began to talk to firefighters to get an understanding of what they felt was an abandoned or vacant structure, it became clear that unoccupied properties were probably more dangerous to firefighters due to the perceived values they connected to the personal property. With the property owner standing on the sidewalk, firefighters sometimes feel it is their duty to try to limit and or save as much of the personal property as possible. Furthermore, they should if they are not endangering their lives and co-workers unnecessarily. It is important that firefighters slow down when they respond to an AVUP. They need to determine their fire mode of operation based on the property condition and not based on peer pressure or traditions. It is important that they start to value their life and the lives of their co-workers higher than personal disposable property. Firefighters need to understand that if there is heavy smoke and fire damage most of the personal property will be replaced by the property homeowner's insurance. The offensive attack should only be used when safe guards are in place to protect the responding firefighters. The second research question is how are other fire departments handling the increasing number of vacant properties in their community? Reviewing other departments' policies and procedures will assist this department in selecting the best tactical, SOPs options. When asked if firefighters were aware of what other fire departments or local city government were doing, 85.5% stated they were not aware of other department procedures. However, this research paper shows that the city is working on the vacant properties issues. The city and the county are working together to form a task force to look at ways to reduce vacant unit. The mayor has applied for federal funds,

to purchase vacant abandoned properties. These properties will then be renovated and sold to low income homebuyer or demolish. The Akron Police Department has started the "Adopt- a- Vacant House" program to help reduce crime in these neighborhoods. So the city actually does have plans and is committed to reducing the number of vacant properties in the community. Most firefighters are not aware of the Ohio Fire Code requiring cities to install placards on vacant units. The research paper references the city of Flint Fire Department, New York, Jonesboro Fire Department, Fulton County Fire Department in Georgia and the Phoenix Fire Department AVUP procedures. The last research question is how to assist fire fighter with picking the correct fire attack mode at AVUP. The first step is to understand that there is a difference between the different types of properties. We have to use different strategies at abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties. Danny Kistner, Battalion Chief, Garland (TX) Fire Department sums it up with his statements:

Strategy is amended when we encounter a fire in an unoccupied building, as it should be. If there is no life safety issue, we should not be risking the lives of our firefighters. I am not advocating a carte blanche defensive strategy on every building found to be unoccupied, but I do advocate a cautious approach when there is little to be gained. If a fire is clearly in the incipient stage, and I mean clearly in the incipient stage without stretching the truth to justify macho showmanship, I think we would be justified in initiating an aggressive interior attack, provided, we are familiar with the structure and its peculiar construction features. In situations where fire has progressed beyond the incipient stage, several variables must be addressed when evaluating a strategy:

1. What is the risk/benefit of an aggressive fire attack?
2. Do we have enough personnel on-scene to satisfy two in/two out?

3. What are the condition and color of the smoke?
4. What will conditions be like in the next minute? Two minutes? Five minutes?
5. Is this a building with which we are familiar?

If the response to any of these questions causes us to hesitate, we should not enter, and we should assume a defensive posture... Unoccupied buildings do not automatically mean defensive strategies, but they should signal the prudent fire officer to slow down and take a closer look at the situation so as not to needlessly risk firefighters' lives.

(KISTNER, 2004, P. 1)

The key is unoccupied properties should not mean automatic defensive strategies.

However, it should not mean an automatic offensive fire operational mode. It is important to do a proper size-up and base your strategies on the incident at hand, with life safety including the lives of the firefighters as your number one priority. This research shows that firefighters have to understand that abandoned, vacant and unoccupied units have to be properly sized-up and before placing firefighters at risk, there have to be safe guards in place that will provide the proper protection for the firefighter's life. Property conservation should never be valued higher than the life of a firefighter.

RECOMMENDATIONS

One thing is certain we are going to have AVUP. The question is how do firefighters limit their hazards at these types of incidents. As this research paper shows, a lot of departments have changed their operating procedures to address abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties.

The first step in dealing with this problem is to make sure everyone is on the same page. As stated in Fire Engineer “Before presenting our answers, let's look at a few definitions to make sure we are all singing off the same song sheet”. (Coleman, 2004, p. 1) This is why it is important that firefighters understand how to size-up and determined their fire attack for an AVUP property. Therefore, my first recommendation is that the department develops an AVUP awareness class. This class should cover the different types of risk at various types of incident and set guidelines on what needs to be in place before we commit fire personnel into a structure. The bare minimum before committing firefighters into a structure should be a backup line and sufficient water supplies that are connected to a working hydrant. The second recommendation would be that the awareness class be put together by the training school with input from the chief officers, companies’ officers and the on line personnel. This awareness class needs to look at what other departments are doing and then incorporate good ideas into awareness training. There also needs to be a section in the class that deals with how to handle different situations that firefighters encounter at abandoned, vacant and unoccupied properties. This class also needs to pass information about programs and plans that the local government is working on so there is no overlapping of resources.

What was clear from the completed surveys is that most firefighters felt that this is a topic that needed more attention. The awareness class can be a channel to pass information between administration, the local government and the community.

General recommendations are:

1. Creation of an Unoccupied Awareness Class.
2. Assigning a fire contact person to work directly with the city government on vacant properties issues.

3. Work with city government to establish an inventory list of abandoned properties, and pass legislations on when utilities can be left on in vacant units. Help establish time lines on when abandoned property can be demolished.
4. Provide training to online personnel so they can inspect and placard abandoned units in their district. This will help give firefighters pre-exposures to these properties in a non-hazardous environment.
5. Become more informed about what other fire departments are doing in relationship to the vacant properties in their community.
6. Work with the mind-set that firefighters' lives are worth more than property conservation.
7. Learn from other departments, so this department does not make the same mistakes.

In summary this research paper helped open my eyes to the hazards that firefighters encounter when dealing with unoccupied properties. It is sad to see that firefighters die every year because they place property conservation at a higher priority than their own lives.

Firefighters have to understand that there is no honor in dying unnecessarily trying to save something that was not worth saving, like disposable property.

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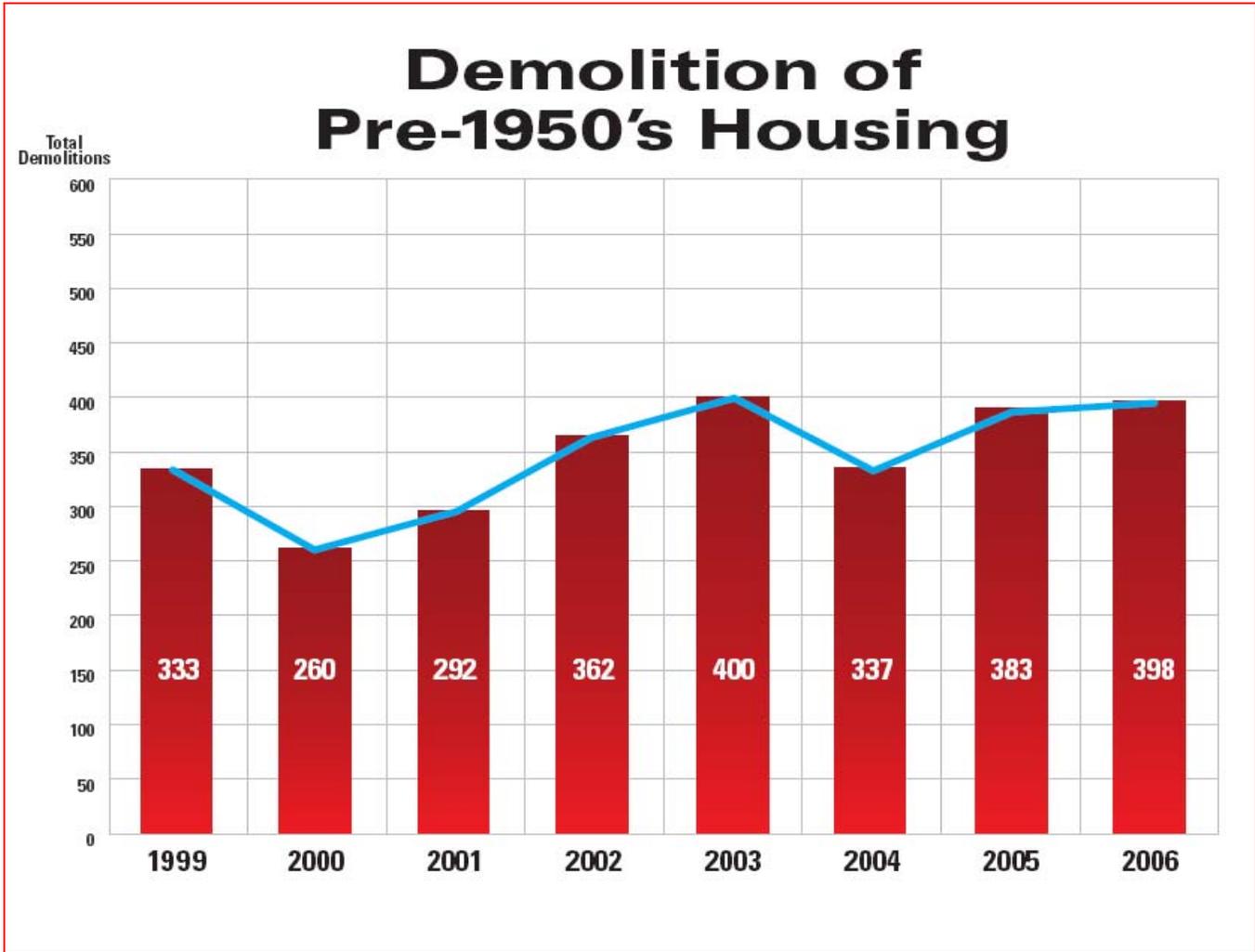
Appendix A: City of Akron Historical Populations Chart

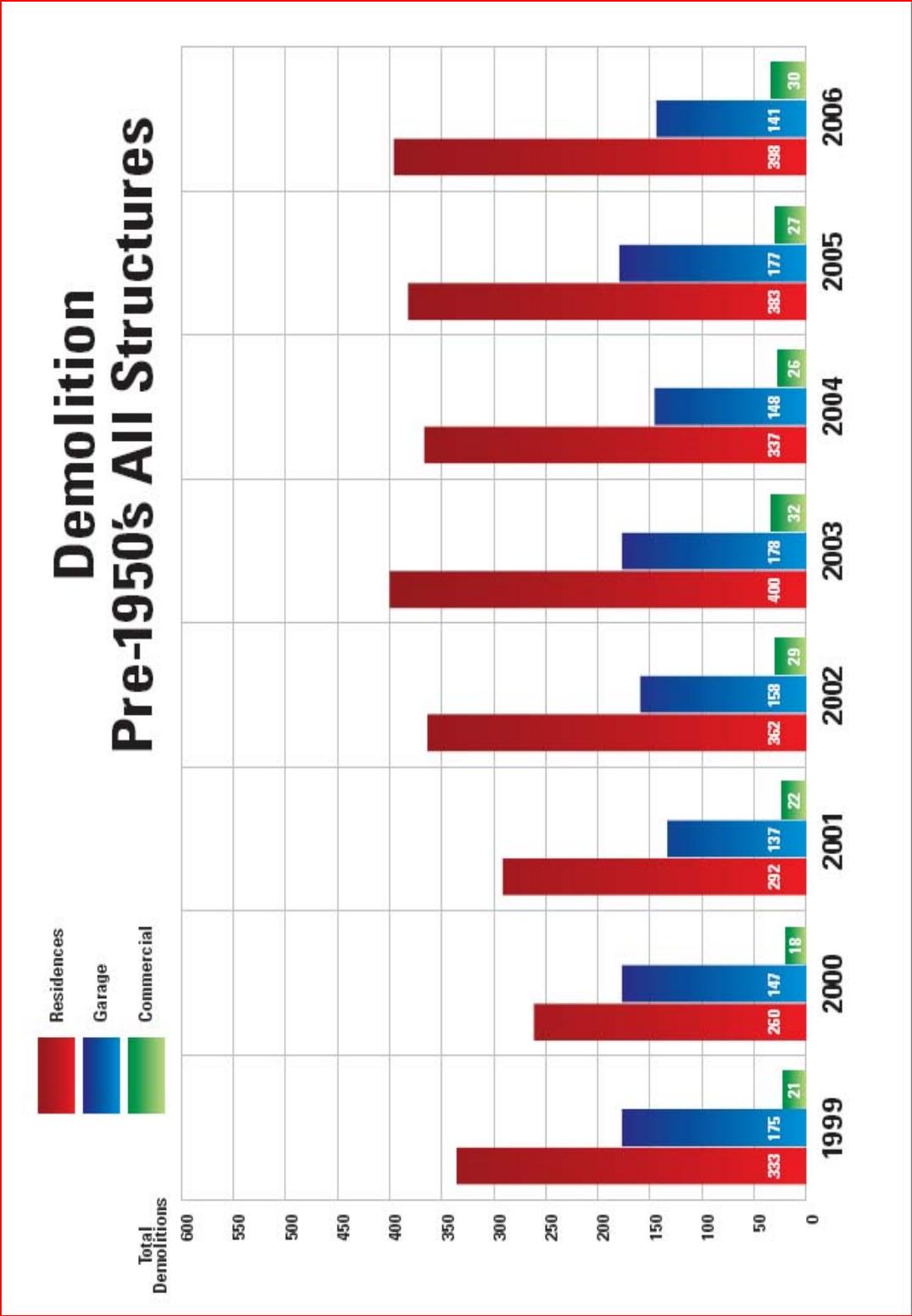
City of Akron Historical Populations Chart		
Census	Pop.	%±
<u>1850</u>	3,266	—
<u>1860</u>	3,477	6.5%
<u>1870</u>	10,006	187.8%
<u>1880</u>	16,512	65%
<u>1890</u>	27,601	67.2%
<u>1900</u>	42,728	54.8%
<u>1910</u>	69,067	61.6%
<u>1920</u>	208,435	201.8%
<u>1930</u>	255,040	22.4%
<u>1940</u>	244,791	-4%
<u>1950</u>	274,605	12.2%
<u>1960</u>	290,351	5.7%
<u>1970</u>	275,425	-5.1%
<u>1980</u>	237,177	-13.9%
<u>1990</u>	223,019	-6%
<u>2000</u>	217,074	-2.7%
Est. 2007	207,934	-4.2%

[13]

(Wikipedia, 2008, p. 1)

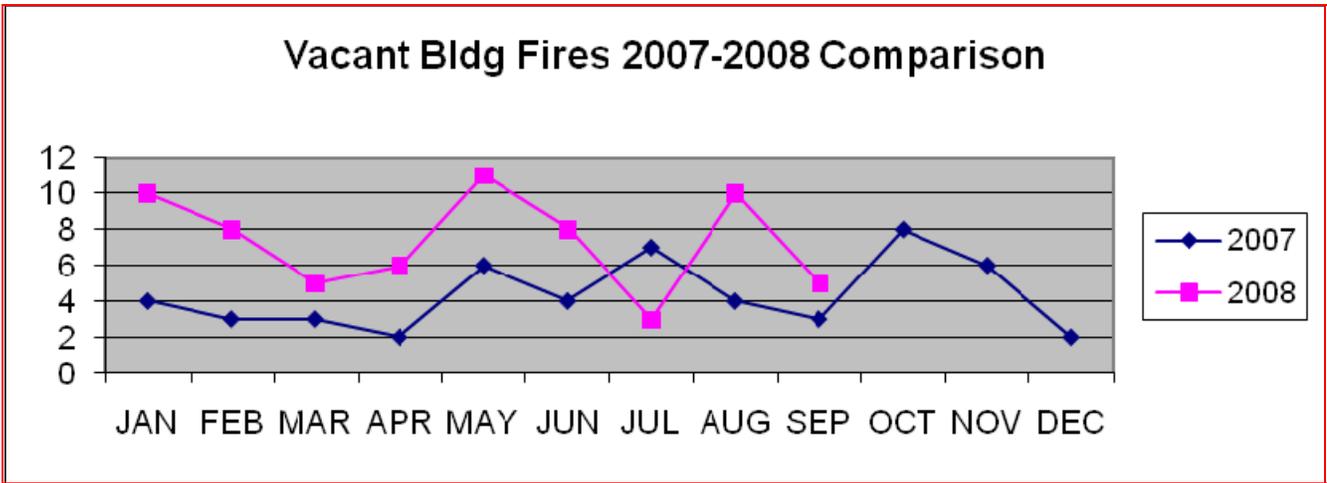
Appendix B: City of Akron, Ohio Demolition Charts, Provided by the Akron Health Department:



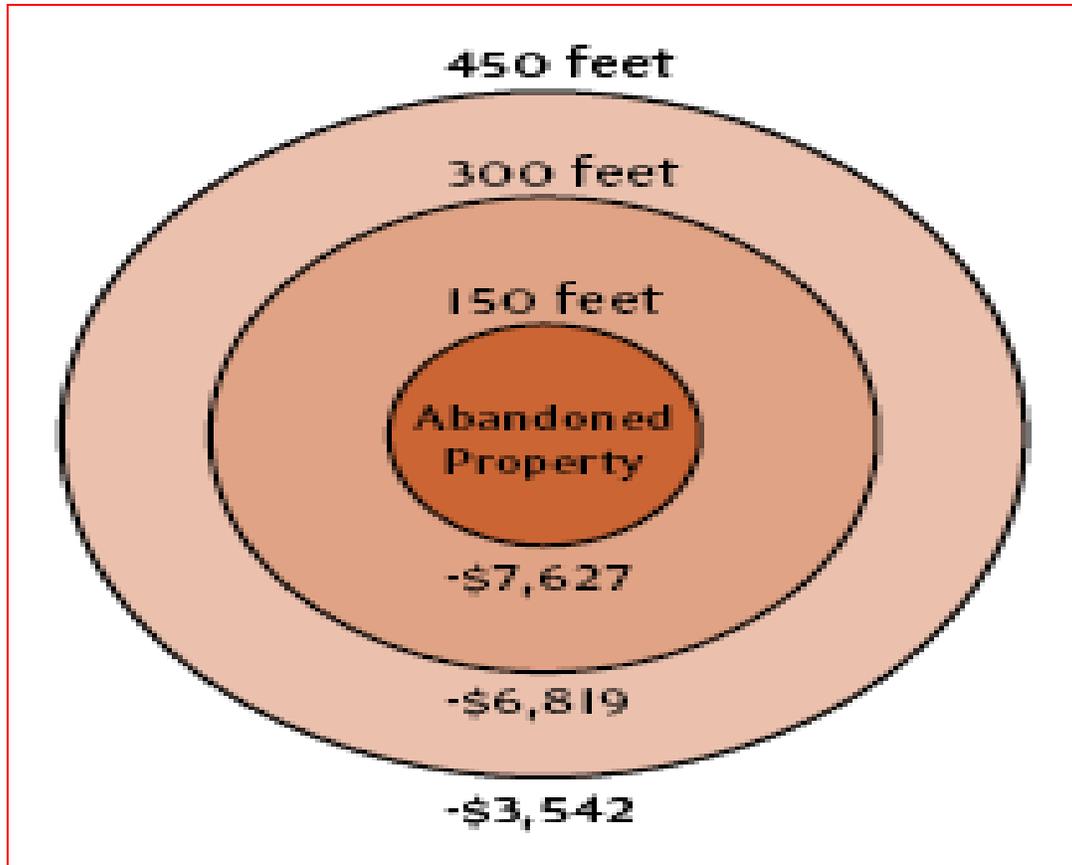


Appendix C: Akron Fire Department's Vacant Building Fire 2007 – 2008 Comparison

Provided by the Akron Fire Department:



Appendix D: Cost Impact of Vacant Property in Your Neighborhood



(National Vacant Properties Campaign, 2005, p. 13)

Appendix E: Firefighters Risking Their Lives to Save Disposable Properties – Total Survey

1. What is your definition of a vacant house?			Response Percent	Response Count
a. Empty			4.3%	2
b. Unoccupied			4.3%	2
c. Not in Use			26.1%	12
d. Abandoned			8.7%	4
e. All of the Above			56.5%	26
			answered question	46
			skipped question	0

2. Does without occupants and unoccupied mean the same when considering a vacant house fire?			Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes			34.8%	16
b. No			65.2%	30
			answered question	46
			skipped question	0

3. Is an abandoned and vacant house considered the same type of property?			Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes			41.3%	19
b. No			58.7%	27
			answered question	46
			skipped question	0

4. Pick only one definition for a vacant property?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Left empty because of not being used or lived in <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	32.6%	15
b. Left empty without being maintained <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	28.3%	13
c. Without occupants or contents, often temporarily <input type="checkbox"/>	17.4%	8
d. Not occupied by an incumbent, official or possessor, often temporarily <input type="checkbox"/>	15.2%	7
e. Free from activity, business or work <input type="checkbox"/>	6.5%	3
answered question		46
skipped question		0

5. Pick only one definition for an abandoned property?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Left empty because of not being used or lived in <input type="checkbox"/>	15.2%	7
b. Left empty without being maintained <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	71.7%	33
c. Without occupants or contents, often temporarily <input type="checkbox"/>	4.3%	2
d. Not occupied by an incumbent, official or possessor, often temporarily <input type="checkbox"/>	4.3%	2
e. Free from activity, business or work <input type="checkbox"/>	4.3%	2
answered question		46
skipped question		0

6. Is it an important firefighter activity to know and separate the difference between abandoned, vacant or unoccupied property?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes		76.1%	35
b. No		23.9%	11
answered question			46
skipped question			0

7. You are responding to a house fire with fire and smoke visible on your arrival, you are told there's no one inside, would this change your fire attack?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes		63.0%	29
b. No		37.0%	17
Comment is not required:			8
answered question			46
skipped question			0

8. When determining your fire attack, is it the same for a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied property?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes		34.8%	16
b. No		65.2%	30
answered question			46
skipped question			0

9. Are the hazards the same in a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied property?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes		40.5%	17
b. No		59.5%	25
answered question			42
skipped question			4

10. In a property where the occupants were able to get out BEFORE you arrived, should you use the same fire attack?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes		40.5%	17
b. No		59.5%	25
Comment is not required:			8
answered question			42
skipped question			4

11. (Questions 11 to 13 involve structures where fire is seen in multiple windows and heavy smoke visible on arrival.) Firefighters are at risk when entering a burning structure, should the firefighter's life be at risk to save a vacant structure?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes		9.5%	4
b. No		90.5%	38
answered question			42
skipped question			4

12. (Questions 11 to 13 involve structures where fire is seen in multiple windows and heavy smoke visible on arrival.)
Firefighters are a risk when entering a burning structure, should the firefighter's life be at risk to save an abandoned structure?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	2.4%	1
b. No <input type="checkbox"/>	97.6%	41
answered question		42
skipped question		4

13. (Questions 11 to 13 involve structures where fire is seen in multiple windows and heavy smoke visible on arrival.)
Firefighters are a risk when entering a burning structure, should the firefighter's life be at risk to save personnel items at an unoccupied structure?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	11.9%	5
b. No <input type="checkbox"/>	88.1%	37
answered question		42
skipped question		4

14. Currently, does your department treat vacant, abandoned or unoccupied property the same as occupied structural fires?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	38.1%	16
b. No <input type="checkbox"/>	61.9%	26
Comment is not required:		5
answered question		42
skipped question		4

15. Do you feel there should be a different SOP or SOG for vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structural emergencies?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	85.7%	36
b. No 	14.3%	6
Comment is not required:		4
answered question		42
skipped question		4

16. When should an offensive attack be used on a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structure fires?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Signs of viable life 	40.5%	17
b. Visible small fire, light smoke	0.0%	0
c. Only one company on the scene	0.0%	0
d. Adequate water supply establish	0.0%	0
e. Placard property (with inside condition warning) 	4.8%	2
f. Non- Placard property	0.0%	0
g. (a, b, d, & e) 	31.0%	13
h. (a, b, c, d, & f) 	14.3%	6
i. All of the above (excluding g & h) 	9.5%	4
Comment is not required:		3
answered question		42
skipped question		4

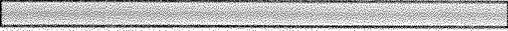
17. Based on the below list, please select only one item that would justify an offensive attack in a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structure?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Occupants left the structure less than 30 minutes prior to the fire <input type="checkbox"/>	4.8%	2
b. Furniture and personal items are present on arrival	0.0%	0
c. Television is on and windows are open <input type="checkbox"/>	14.3%	6
d. Smells like food is cooking on the stove <input type="checkbox"/>	7.1%	3
e. All of the above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	66.7%	28
f. None of the above <input type="checkbox"/>	7.1%	3
Comment is not required:		2
answered question		42
skipped question		4

18. What hazards do you feel are possible in a vacant or abandoned property?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Intense fire	0.0%	0
b. Structural member compromised	0.0%	0
c. Arson	0.0%	0
d. Holes cut in the floor	0.0%	0
e. Windows boarded-up and doors blocked	0.0%	0
f. Gas explosion	0.0%	0
g. All of the above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	100.0%	42
Comment is not required:		1
answered question		42
skipped question		4

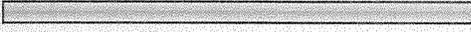
19. What hazards do you feel are possible in an unoccupied structure where the occupants left before your arrival?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Intense fire 	9.8%	4
b. Structural member compromised	0.0%	0
c. Arson 	2.4%	1
d. Holes cut in the floor	0.0%	0
e. Windows boarded-up and doors blocked	0.0%	0
f. Gas explosion	0.0%	0
g. All of the above 	87.8%	36
Comment is not required:		0
answered question		41
skipped question		5

20. Do you feel that vacant, abandoned properties need to be inspected and placard?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	87.8%	36
b. No 	12.2%	5
Comment is not required:		3
answered question		41
skipped question		5

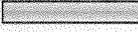
21. If yes, who do you feel should inspect vacant or abandoned homes in your community?			Response Percent	Response Count
a. Fire Prevention Inspectors			19.5%	8
b. Fire Companies			19.5%	8
c. Building Department			36.6%	15
d. Police Department			0.0%	0
e. Community Organizer			2.4%	1
f. Health Department			7.3%	3
g. N/A			9.8%	4
Other (please specify)			4.9%	2
			answered question	41
			skipped question	5

22. Do you feel that vacant or abandoned homes are issues that affect firefighters in your community?			Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes			95.1%	39
b. No			4.9%	2
			Comment is not required:	1
			answered question	41
			skipped question	5

23. Do you feel that the local city government has a plan for dealing with the increasing number of vacant units?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	17.1%	7
b. No 	82.9%	34
Comment is not required:		1
answered question		41
skipped question		5

24. Do you feel that the fire department needs to play an active role in dealing with vacant units in the community?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	75.6%	31
b. No 	24.4%	10
Comment is not required:		0
answered question		41
skipped question		5

25. Do you feel that a blitz attack on vacant abandoned or unoccupied properties require fire departments to remain on the scene longer?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	4.9%	2
b. No 	95.1%	39
Comment is not required:		0
answered question		41
skipped question		5

26. Do you feel that a defense attack on vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structures require fire departments to remain on the scene longer?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	53.7%	22
b. No 	46.3%	19
Comment is not required:		1
answered question		41
skipped question		5

27. Why do you feel fire department's use offensive attack on vacant and/or abandoned properties?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Tradition 	26.8%	11
b. No SOP or SOG for dealing with vacant, abandoned or unoccupied units 	22.0%	9
c. To get companies back in service sooner	0.0%	0
d. Officers do not consider firefighters risk <input type="checkbox"/>	2.4%	1
e. None of the above 	14.6%	6
f. All of the above 	34.1%	14
Comment is not required:		6
answered question		41
skipped question		5

28. Where are most firefighters killed in the line of duty in the United State of America?			Response Percent	Response Count
a. Commercial building fires	<input type="text" value="12.2%"/>		12.2%	5
b. High-rise apartment building fires	<input type="text" value="0.0%"/>		0.0%	0
c. Vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structure fires	<input type="text" value="17.1%"/>		17.1%	7
d. In route to and from the fire grounds	<input type="text" value="70.7%"/>		70.7%	29
Comment is not required:				2
answered question				41
skipped question				5

29. Should there be a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied SOP or SOG?			Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes	<input type="text" value="85.4%"/>		85.4%	35
b. No	<input type="text" value="14.6%"/>		14.6%	6
Comment is not required:				2
answered question				41
skipped question				5

30. If yes, who do you feel should be responsible for creating this policy?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Chief Officers 	41.5%	17
b. Company Officers 	14.6%	6
c. Online firefighters 	2.4%	1
d. Training School 	29.3%	12
f. N/A 	7.3%	3
e. Fire Prevention 	4.9%	2
Comment is not required		5
answered question		41
skipped question		5

31. Do you feel there has been an increase in the number of vacant house fires this year for your department?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	95.1%	39
b. No 	4.9%	2
Comment is not required:		4
answered question		41
skipped question		5

32. Should there be a local policy that regulates when the utilities can be left on in a vacant or abandoned unit?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	92.7%	38
b. No 	7.3%	3
Comment not required:		1
answered question		41
skipped question		5

33. Do you feel that the local city government has a plan for dealing with the Increasing number of vacant units?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	17.1%	7
b. No 	82.9%	34
Comment not required:		1
answered question		41
skipped question		5

34. Do you feel that gas should be left on in a vacant unit to protect the pipes during the cold weather (winter season)?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	22.0%	9
b. No 	78.0%	32
Comment not required:		4
answered question		41
skipped question		5

35. Do you feel that electric should be left on to protect the vacant unit?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	29.3%	12
b. No 	70.7%	29
Comment not required:		3
answered question		41
skipped question		5

36. Do you feel that a utility being left on adds to the hazards firefighters face during a vacant house fire?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	90.2%	37
b. No 	9.8%	4
Comment is not required:		2
answered question		41
skipped question		5

37. Do you feel that the city (local government) should demolish abandoned properties after it has not been used for over three year?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	61.0%	25
b. No 	39.0%	16
Comment is not required:		5
answered question		41
skipped question		5

38. Are you familiar with other department's vacant units SOP or SOG?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	14.6%	6
b. No 	85.4%	35
Comment is not required:		0
answered question		41
skipped question		5

39. Do you feel a fully involved abandoned house fire should be allowed to burn to the ground with exposures protected?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	87.8%	36
b. No 	12.2%	5
Comment is not required:		2
answered question		41
skipped question		5

40. Have you been present at a vacant house fire where a firefighter has been injured?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	70.7%	29
b. No 	29.3%	12
Comment is not required:		1
answered question		41
skipped question		5

41. Have you been at a fire where someone was still in the abandoned or vacant unit on your arrival?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	53.7%	22
b. No 	46.3%	19
Comment is not required:		1
answered question		41
skipped question		5

42. Have you been at an abandoned or vacant house fire where someone died at the scene?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	7.3%	3
b. No 	92.7%	38
Comment is not required:		0
answered question		41
skipped question		5

43. Do you feel that the department has taken the necessary steps to ensure your safety at vacant units?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	46.3%	19
b. No 	53.7%	22
Comment is not required:		4
answered question		41
skipped question		5

44. Do you feel that the department has taken the necessary steps to ensure your safety at abandoned units?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	36.6%	15
b. No 	63.4%	26
Comment is not required:		0
answered question		41
skipped question		5

45. Do you feel that the department has taken the necessary steps to ensure your safety at unoccupied units?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	51.2%	21
b. No 	48.8%	20
Comment is not required:		0
answered question		41
skipped question		5

46. With the proper training, should firefighters take the responsibility to inspect and establish placards hazard levels for vacant units in their district?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	63.4%	26
b. No 	36.6%	15
Comment is not required:		4
answered question		41
skipped question		5

47. Do you feel your department need to provide awareness training on how to deal with vacant, abandoned or unoccupied properties in your community?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes 	87.8%	36
b. No 	12.2%	5
Comment is not required:		2
answered question		41
skipped question		5

48. What is your current rank or title on your department?

	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Firefighter 	24.4%	10
b. Lieutenant 	39.0%	16
c. Captain 	22.0%	9
d. District Chief 	7.3%	3
e. Deputy Chief 	2.4%	1
f. Chief	0.0%	0
g. Other 	4.9%	2
Comment is not required:		1
answered question		41
skipped question		5

Appendix: F: Dealing with Vacant houses in our Community

1. How would you rate the impact of health related issues of vacant properties in the community?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
1. Not a real issue		9.1%	1
2. Becoming a issue		27.3%	3
3. A major issue		63.6%	7
Comment is Optional:			1
answered question			11
skipped question			0

2. Currently, do you feel that the number of vacant properties are creating a hazard to the community?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
1. Yes		100.0%	11
2. No		0.0%	0
Comment is Optional:			2
answered question			11
skipped question			0

3. Some communities has started to place informational placard on vacant units, to let people know of interior hazards. Do you feel this is a good idea?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
1. Yes		90.9%	10
2. No		9.1%	1
Comment is Optional:			3
answered question			11
skipped question			0

4. If Akron started to placard vacant units, who should be responsible for doing the inspections and installing the placards?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
1. Building Department		18.2%	2
2. Health Department		54.5%	6
3. Fire Prevention Department		0.0%	0
4. Police Department		0.0%	0
5. Local Non-profit Organizations		27.3%	3
	Other (please specify)		2
answered question			11
skipped question			0

5. Do you feel that the increase in the number of vacant units has affected property values in the community?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
1. Yes		90.9%	10
2. No		9.1%	1
3. Not sure		0.0%	0
4. Don't Know		0.0%	0
Comment is Optional:			1
answered question			11
skipped question			0

6. If the city forms a committee to work on the vacant properties issue, who should be on the committee? (Only pick five)

		Response Percent	Response Count
1. Health Department		72.7%	8
2. Planning Department		63.6%	7
3. Building Department		54.5%	6
4. Fire Department		27.3%	3
5. Police Department		9.1%	1
6. Mayor Cabinet members		27.3%	3
7. Council members		45.5%	5
8. Contractors		9.1%	1
9. Landlords		36.4%	4
10. Property Owners		54.5%	6
11. Community groups Leaders		36.4%	4
12. Utilities Companies (Gas, Electric)		18.2%	2
13. Renters		9.1%	1
14. AMHA - (Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority)		9.1%	1
15. Postal Workers		9.1%	1
16. Non-Profit group members		54.5%	6
17. Other		0.0%	0
	Comment is Optional:		0
	answered question		11
	skipped question		0

7. Do you feel that the city have a plan for dealing with the increasing number of vacant units?

	Response Percent	Response Count
1. Yes 	18.2%	2
2. No 	81.8%	9
Comment is Optional:		1
answered question		11
skipped question		0

8. If yes, to question #7, are you a part of the city's current plan on how to deal with the increasing number of vacant units?

	Response Percent	Response Count
1. Yes 	9.1%	1
2. No 	18.2%	2
3. N/A 	45.5%	5
4. No would like to be a part of the committee 	27.3%	3
Comment is Optional:		0
answered question		11
skipped question		0

9. Should there be a local policy that regulates when the utilities can be left on in a vacant or abandoned units?

	Response Percent	Response Count
1. Yes 	72.7%	8
2. No 	27.3%	3
3. There is a policy	0.0%	0
Comment is Optional:		0
answered question		11
skipped question		0

10. Do you feel that gas should be left on in vacant units to protect the pipes during the cold weather (winter season)?

	Response Percent	Response Count
1. Yes 	18.2%	2
2. No 	81.8%	9
Comment is Optional:		2
answered question		11
skipped question		0

11. Do you feel that electric should be left on to protect the vacant unit?

	Response Percent	Response Count
1. Yes 	27.3%	3
2. No 	72.7%	8
Comment is Optional:		0
answered question		11
skipped question		0

12. Do you feel that utilities being left on adds to the community hazard?

	Response Percent	Response Count
1. Yes 	72.7%	8
2. No 	27.3%	3
Comment is Optional:)		0
answered question		11
skipped question		0

13. Do you feel that the city or (local government) should be able to demolish abandoned properties after the property has not been used for over?

		Response Percent	Response Count
1. Three years		45.5%	5
2. Five years		9.1%	1
3. Seven years		27.3%	3
4. Should not demolish abandoned properties		18.2%	2
	Comment is Optional:		2
	answered question		11
	skipped question		0

14. Currently is there any vacant properties in the block that you live on?

		Response Percent	Response Count
1. Yes		54.5%	6
2. No		36.4%	4
3. Not sure		9.1%	1
	Comment is Optional:		1
	answered question		11
	skipped question		0

15. Currently, what type of department, agencies or group do you work for?			Response Percent	Response Count
1. Health Department			18.2%	2
2. Planning Department			0.0%	0
3. Building Department			0.0%	0
4. Fire Department			0.0%	0
5. Police Department			0.0%	0
6. Mayor Cabinet members			0.0%	0
7. Council members			0.0%	0
8. Contractors			0.0%	0
9. Landlords			0.0%	0
10. Property Owners			0.0%	0
11. Community groups Leaders			0.0%	0
12. Utilities Companies (Gas, Electric)			0.0%	0
13. Renters			0.0%	0
14. AMHA - (Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority)			0.0%	0
15. Postal Workers			0.0%	0
16. Non-Profit group members			72.7%	8
17. Other			9.1%	1
		Comment Optional:		1
		answered question		11
		skipped question		0

Appendix G: Firefighters Risking Their Lives to Save Disposable Properties Blank Survey

1. What is your definition of a vacant house?
 - a. Empty
 - b. Unoccupied
 - c. Not in use
 - d. Abandoned
 - e. All of the above

2. Does without occupants and unoccupied mean the same when considering a vacant house fire?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

3. Is an abandoned and vacant house considered the same type of property?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

4. Picking only one definition for a vacant property?
 - a. Left empty because of not being used or lived in
 - b. Left empty without being maintained
 - c. Without occupants or contents, often temporarily
 - d. Not occupied by an incumbent, official or possessor, often temporarily
 - e. Free from activity, business or work

5. Picking only one definition for an abandoned property?
 - a. Left empty because of not being used or lived in
 - b. Left empty without being maintained
 - c. Without occupants or contents, often temporarily
 - d. Not occupied by an incumbent, official or possessor, often temporarily
 - e. Free from activity, business or work

6. Is it an important firefighter activity to know and separate the difference between abandoned, vacant, or unoccupied property?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

7. You are responding to a house fire with fire and smoke visible on your arrival, you are told there's no one inside, would this change your fire attack?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

8. When determining your fire attack, is it the same for a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied property?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

9. Are the hazards the same in a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied property?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

10. In a property where the occupants were able to get out BEFORE you arrive, should you use the same fire attack?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

Questions 11 to 13 involved structures where fire is seen in multiple windows and heavy smoke visible on arrival.)

11. Firefighters are at risk when entering a burning structure, should the firefighter's life be at risk to save a vacant structure?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
12. Firefighters are a risk when entering a burning structure, should the firefighter's life be at risk to save an abandoned structure?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
13. Firefighters are a risk when entering a burning structure, should the firefighter's life be at risk to save personnel items at an unoccupied structure?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
14. Currently, does your department treat vacant, abandoned or unoccupied property the same as occupied structural fires?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

15. Do you feel there should be a different SOP or SOG for vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structural emergencies?

- a. Yes
- b. No

16. When should an offensive attack be used on a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structure fires?

- a. Signs of a viable life
- b. Visible small fire, light smoke
- c. Only one company on the scene
- d. Adequate water supply establish
- e. Placard property (with inside condition warning)
- f. Non- Placard property
- g. (a, b, d, & e)
- h. (a, b, c, d, & f)
- i. All of the above (excluding g & h)

17. Based on the below list, please select only one item that would justify an offensive attack in a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structure?

- a. Occupants left the structure less than 30 minutes prior to the fire
- b. Furniture and personal items are preset on arrival
- c. Television is on and windows are open
- d. Smells like food is cooking on the stove
- e. All of the above
- f. None of the above

18. What hazards do you feel are possible in a vacant or abandoned property?
- a. Intense fire
 - b. Structural member compromised
 - c. Arson
 - d. Holes cut in the floor
 - e. Windows boarded-up and doors blocked
 - f. Gas explosion
 - g. All of the above
19. What hazards do you feel are possible in an unoccupied structure where the occupants left before you arrive?
- a. Intense fire
 - b. Structural member compromised
 - c. Arson
 - d. Holes cut in the floor
 - e. Windows boarded-up and doors blocked
 - f. Gas explosion
 - g. All of the above
20. Do you feel that vacant, abandoned properties need to be inspected and placard?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

21. If yes, who do you feel should inspect vacant or abandoned homes in your community?
(Select only one)
- a. Fire Prevention Inspectors
 - b. Fire Companies
 - c. Building Department
 - d. Police Department
 - e. Community Organizer
 - f. Health Department
 - g. N/A
22. Do you feel that vacant or abandoned homes are issues that affect firefighters in your community?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
23. Do you feel that the local city government has a plan for dealing with the increasing number of vacant units?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
24. Do you feel that the fire department needs to play an active role in dealing with vacant units in the community?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
25. Do you feel that a blitz attack on vacant abandoned or unoccupied properties require fire departments to remain on the scene longer?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

26. Do you feel that a defense attack on vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structures require fire departments to remain on the scene longer?

- a. Yes
- b. No

27. Why do you feel fire department's use offensive attack on vacant and/or abandoned properties?

- a. Tradition
- b. No SOP or SOG for dealing with vacant, abandoned or unoccupied units
- c. To get companies back in service sooner
- d. Officers to not consider firefighters risk
- e. None of the above
- f. All of the above

28. Where are most firefighters killed in the line of duty in the United States of America?

- a. Commercial building fires
- b. High-rise apartment building fires
- c. Vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structure fires
- d. In route to and from the fire grounds

29. Should there be a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied SOP or SOG?

- a. Yes
- b. No

30. If yes, who do you feel should be responsible for creating this policy?
- a. Chief Officers
 - b. Company Officers
 - c. Online firefighters
 - d. Training School
 - e. Fire Prevention
31. Do you feel there has been an increase in the number of vacant house fire this year for your department?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
32. Should there be a local policy that regulates when the utilities can be left on in a vacant or abandoned unit?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
33. Do you feel that the local city government has a plan for dealing with the increasing number of vacant unit?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
34. Do you feel that gas should be left on in a vacant unit to protect the pipes during the cold weather (winter season)?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

35. Do you feel that electric should be left on to protect the vacant unit?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
36. Do you feel that a utility being left on adds to the hazards firefighters face during a vacant house fire?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
37. Do you feel that the city (local government) should demolish abandoned properties after it has not been used for over three years?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
38. Are you familiar with other department's vacant units SOP or SOG?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
39. Do you feel a fully involved abandoned house fire should be allowed to burn to the ground
- a. Yes
 - b. No
40. Have you been present at a vacant house fire where a firefighter has been injured?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

41. Have you been at a fire where someone was still in the abandoned or vacant unit on your arrival?

- a. Yes
- b. No

42. Have you been at an abandoned or vacant house fire where someone died at the scene??

- a. Yes
- b. No

43. Do you feel that the department has taken the necessary steps to ensure your safety at vacant unit?

- a. Yes
- b. No

44. Do you feel that the department has taken the necessary steps to ensure your safety at abandoned unit?

- a. Yes
- b. No

45. Do you feel that the department has taken the necessary steps to ensure your safety at unoccupied unit?

- a. Yes
- b. No

46. With the proper training, should firefighters take the responsibility to inspect and establish placards hazard levels for vacant units in their district?

- a. Yes
- b. No

47. Do you feel your department need to provide awareness training on how to deal with vacant, abandoned or unoccupied properties in your community?

- a. Yes
- b. No

48. What is your current rank or title on your department?

- a. Firefighter
- b. Lieutenant
- c. Captain
- d. District Chief
- e. Deputy Chief
- f. Chief
- g. Other

Appendix E: Firefighters Risking Their Lives to Save Disposable Property – Survey Rank Breakdown

1 Hazards Firefighters Are Exposed to at Vacant Residential Properties
What is your definition of a vacant house?

Answer Options	Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters		
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	
a. Empty	7.7%	1	6.9%	1	0.0%	0	
b. Unoccupied	7.7%	1	6.9%	1	0.0%	0	
c. Not in Use	46.2%	6	6.9%	1	20.0%	2	
d. Abandoned	7.7%	1	18.8%	3	0.0%	0	
e. All of the Above	30.8%	4	52.2%	10	80.0%	8	
answered question		13	answered question		14	answered question	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question	

2 Does without occupants and unoccupied mean the same when considering a vacant house fire?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	
a. Yes	61.5%	8	31.2%	5	20.0%	2	
b. No	38.5%	5	68.8%	11	80.0%	8	
answered question		13	answered question		14	answered question	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question	

3 Is an abandoned and vacant house considered the same type of property?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	
a. Yes	38.5%	5	48.6%	7	50.0%	5	
b. No	61.5%	8	51.4%	9	50.0%	5	
answered question		13	answered question		14	answered question	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question	

4 Pick only one definition for a vacant property?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	
a. Left empty because of not being used or lived in	38.5%	5	25.0%	4	20.0%	2	
b. Left empty without being maintained	15.4%	2	37.5%	6	40.0%	4	
c. Without occupants or contents, often temporarily	15.4%	2	25.0%	4	30.0%	2	
d. Not occupied by an incumbent, official or possessor	23.1%	3	6.9%	1	30.0%	3	
e. Free from activity, business or work	7.7%	1	6.9%	1	0.0%	0	
answered question		13	answered question		14	answered question	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question	

5 Pick only one definition for an abandoned property?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Left empty because of not being used or lived in	15.4%	2	25.0%	4	10.0%	1
b. Left empty without being maintained	76.9%	10	62.5%	10	70.0%	7
c. Without occupants or contents, often temporarily	0.0%	0	12.5%	2	0.0%	0
d. Not occupied by an incumbent, official or possessor	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	20.0%	2
e. Free from activity, business or work	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
	answered question	13	answered question	16	answered question	10
	skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0

6 Is it an important firefighter activity to know and separate the difference between abandoned, vacant or unoccupied property?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes	100.0%	13	62.5%	10	70.0%	7
b. No	0.0%	0	37.5%	6	30.0%	3
	answered question	13	answered question	16	answered question	10
	skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0

		Captains & Chiefs	Lieutenants	Firefighters		
7	You are responding to a house fire with fire and smoke visible on your arrival, you are told there's no one inside, would this change your fire attack?					
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes	76.9%	10	50.0%	6	60.0%	6
b. No	23.1%	3	50.0%	6	40.0%	4
	Comment is not required:	1	Comment is not required:	3	Comment is not required:	1
	answered question	13	answered question	16	answered question	10
	skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0
Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:				
C	1 11/17/2008 01:31:00	OFFENSIVE ATTACK WITH CAUTION				
L1	1 11/09/2008 12:57:00	RISK VS BENEFIT/FIRST PRIORITY OF FIRE SERVICE: SAFETY				
L1	2 11/10/2008 14:26:00	I risk no life for property only....				
L1	3 11/10/2008 15:25:00	While we would still want to save property, we would not be as likely to take a risk if there is no one inside.				
L1	4 11/10/2008 15:27:00	occupied until proven				
L1	5 11/12/2008 14:17:00	not initially until after an onscene size-up has been				
FF	1 11/17/2008 11:55:00	You would still be required to check to see if anyone was in the property.				

8 When determining your fire attack, is it the same for a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied property?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes	15.4%	2	31.2%	5	60.0%	6
b. No	84.6%	11	68.8%	11	40.0%	4
	answered question	13	answered question	16	answered question	10
	skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0

9 Are the hazards the same in a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied property?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	
a. Yes	30.2%	4	31.6%	3	70.0%	7	
b. No	69.2%	9	68.2%	11	30.0%	3	
answered question		13	answered question		13	answered question	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question	

10 In a property where the occupants were able to get out BEFORE you arrived, should you use the same fire attack?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	
a. Yes	38.5%	5	43.8%	7	40.0%	4	
b. No	61.3%	8	56.2%	9	60.0%	6	
Comment is not required.		3	Comment is not required.		4	Comment is not required.	
answered question		13	answered question		13	answered question	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question	

Number Response Date Comment is not required:

1	11/17/2008 01:32:00	A GREATER SENSE OF URGENCY ACCOMPANIES THE FIRE WITH "PEOPLE TRAPPED"
2	11/17/2008 14:31:00	Same as if vacant
1	11/20/2008 13:29:00	TOO MANY VARIABLES TO CONSIDER HERE

11 (Questions 11 to 13 involve structures where fire is seen in multiple windows and heavy smoke visible on arrival)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	
a. Yes	7.7%	1	6.9%	1	20.0%	2	
b. No	92.3%	12	93.1%	15	80.0%	8	
answered question		13	answered question		13	answered question	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question	

	Captains & Chiefs	Lieutenants	Firefighters				
12 (Questions 11 to 13 involve structures where fire is seen in multiple windows and heavy smoke visible on arrival)							
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	
a. Yes	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	
b. No	92.3%	12	100.0%	10	100.0%	10	
answered question		13	answered question		10	answered question	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question	

13 (Questions 11 to 13 involve structures where fire is seen in multiple windows and heavy smoke visible on arrival)

Answer Option	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes	7.7%	1	12.1%	3	10.0%	1
b. No	92.3%	12	87.9%	15	90.0%	9
	answered question	13	answered question	18	answered question	10
	skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0

14 Currently, does your department treat vacant, abandoned or unoccupied property the same as occupied structural fires?

Answer Option	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes	30.8%	4	50.0%	8	50.0%	7
b. No	69.2%	9	50.0%	8	70.0%	7
	Comment is not required:	2	Comment is not required:	3	Comment is not required:	0
	answered question	13	answered question	18	answered question	10
	skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0

Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:
C	1 11/10/2008 1:23:50	Yes from an SOG point of view, depending upon the individual(s) on-scene (company commanders and/or IC) calling the shots.
C	2 11/17/2008 0:13:40	IC DECIDES OFFENSIVE VS DEFENSIVE POSTURE
Lt	1 11/09/2008 1:3:44:00	should not, inadequate training
Lt	2 11/10/2008 1:5:30:00	If known to be unoccupied
Lt	3 11/10/2008 1:5:31:00	I think the initial mindset is to attack. Depending on the amount of fire showing, that initial attack would become defensive much quicker on a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structure.

15 Do you feel there should be a different SOP or SOG for vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structural emergencies?

Answer Option	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes	61.5%	12	81.3%	13	80.0%	8
b. No	38.5%	8	18.7%	3	20.0%	2
	Comment is not required:	1	Comment is not required:	2	Comment is not required:	1
	answered question	13	answered question	18	answered question	10
	skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0

Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:
CC	1 11/09/2008 1:17:20:00	SOP SHOULD BE WRITTEN FOR THE OFFICERS TO ASSESS THE FIRE CONDITIONS AND RISKS INVOLVED THAT ARE PRESENT AT THE TIME THEY ARRIVE
FF	1 11/20/2008 1:3:30:00	RISK A LITTLE TO SAVE A LITTLE.. RISK ALOT TO SAVE ALOT.

17

Do you feel there should be a different SOP or SOG for vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structural emergencies?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes	32.3%	11	63.6%	19	80.0%	8
b. No	7.7%	1	18.2%	3	20.0%	1
Comment is not required:			Comment is not required:			Comment is not required:
answered question		11	answered question		18	answered question
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question
Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:				
1	11/09/2008 11:22:00	SOP SHOULD BE WRITTEN FOR THE OFFICERS TO ASSESS THE FIRE CONDITIONS AND RISKS INVOLVED THAT ARE PRESENT AT THE TIME THEY ARRIVE				
1	11/20/2008 15:30:00	RISK A LITTLE TO SAVE A LITTLE... RISK ALOT TO SAVE ALOT.				

CC
FF

18

When should an offensive attack be used on a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structure fires?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Signs of viable life	46.2%	6	27.5%	6	40.0%	4
b. Visible small fire, light smoke	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
c. Only one company on the scene	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
d. Adequate water supply establish	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
e. Placard property (with inside condition warning)	7.7%	1	6.3%	1	0.0%	0
f. Non- Placard property	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
g. (a, b, c, &amp;amp;amp; e)	24.1%	1	14.6%	7	20.0%	2
h. (a, b, c, d, &amp;amp; f)	7.7%	1	6.3%	1	20.0%	1
i. All of the above (excluding g, &amp;amp; f)	18.4%	2	6.3%	1	10.0%	1
Comment is not required:			Comment is not required:			Comment is not required:
answered question		13	answered question		11	answered question
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question
Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:				
1	11/10/2008 12:35:00	I felt e was the best choice, depending upon conditions.				
2	11/10/2008 16:17:00	also feel b. is acceptable answer				
1	11/12/2008 19:49:00	this question assumes that a structure is known to vacant, abandoned, or unoccupied. All fire should be assumed to have life safety hazards until on scene companies confirm otherwise.				

C
Lt.

	Captains & Chiefs	Lieutenants	Firefighters			
Based on the below list, please select only one item that would justify an offensive attack in a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structure?						
17						
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Occupants left the structure less than 30 minutes	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	10.0%	1
b. Furniture and personal items are present on arrival	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
c. Television is on and windows are open	7.7%	1	25.0%	4	10.0%	1
d. Smells like food is cooking on the stove	7.7%	1	12.5%	2	0.0%	0
e. All of the above	76.6%	10	56.3%	9	70.0%	7
f. None of the above	0.0%	0	6.3%	1	10.0%	1
Comment is not required:			Comment is not required:			Comment is not required:
answered question		13	answered question		18	answered question
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question
Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:				
1	11/10/2008 12:37:00	Again, it would depend upon the commanders) and their experience, knowledge, and judgement.				
1	11/09/2008 13:04:00	priority one for fire service: life safety				

C
Lt.

18 What hazards do you feel are possible in a vacant or abandoned property?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Intense fire	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
b. Structural member compromised	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
c. Arson	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
d. Holes cut in the floor	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
e. Windows boarded-up and doors blocked	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
f. Gas explosion	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
g. All of the above	100.0%	13	100.0%	16	100.0%	10
Comment is not required:			Comment is not required:			0
answered question		13	answered question		16	10
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	0
1	11/09/2008 13:06:00	priority one for fire service: life safety				

19 What hazards do you feel are possible in an unoccupied structure where the occupants left before your arrival?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Intense fire	7.7%	1	12.5%	2	0.0%	0
b. Structural member compromised	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
c. Arson	0.0%	0	6.3%	1	0.0%	0
d. Holes cut in the floor	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
e. Windows boarded-up and doors blocked	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
f. Gas explosion	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
g. All of the above	92.3%	12	81.3%	13	100.0%	10
Comment is not required:			Comment is not required:			0
answered question		13	answered question		16	10
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	0

20 Do you feel that vacant, abandoned properties need to be inspected and placard?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Yes	92.3%	12	87.5%	14	80.0%	8
b. No	7.7%	1	12.5%	2	20.0%	2
Comment is not required:			Comment is not required:			1
answered question		13	answered question		16	10
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	0
Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:				
1	11/18/2008 14:33:00	inspected not placard				
1	11/09/2008 13:07:00	priority one for fire service: life safety				
1	11/11/2008 19:49:00	WHO WOULD DO THAT AND HOW WOULD YOU FIND OUT THEY ARE NO LONGER IN USE				

21 If yes, who do you feel should inspect vacant or abandoned homes in your community?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
a. Fire Prevention Inspectors	15.4%	2	25.0%	4	20.0%	2
b. Fire Companies	23.1%	3	25.0%	4	0.0%	0
c. Building Department	46.2%	6	50.0%	8	80.0%	8
d. Police Department	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
e. Community Organizer	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
f. Health Department	0.0%	0	6.3%	1	20.0%	2
g. N/A	0.0%	0	12.5%	2	20.0%	2
Other (please specify)	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	10.0%	1
answered question			answered question			16
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	0
Number	Response Date	Other (please specify)				
1	11/18/2008 14:35:00	a of the above				

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
22	Do you feel that vacant or abandoned homes are issues that affect firefighters in your community?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	84.0%	11	100.0%	10	100.0%	10
	b. No	15.4%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
		Comment is not required	0	Comment is not required	1	Comment is not required	0
		answered question	13	answered question	10	answered question	10
		skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0
1.	1 11/09/2008 13:08:00	priority one for fire service: life safety					

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
23	Do you feel that the local city government has a plan for dealing with the increasing number of vacant units?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	21.4%	3	11.5%	2	20.0%	1
	b. No	78.6%	10	87.5%	14	90.0%	9
		Comment is not required	1	Comment is not required	0	Comment is not required	0
		answered question	13	answered question	16	answered question	10
		skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0

Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:
1	11/09/2008 13:22:00	THEY ARE TREATING THEM DOWN

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
24	Do you feel that the fire department needs to play an active role in dealing with vacant units in the community?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	69.2%	9	81.2%	13	80.0%	8
	b. No	30.8%	4	18.8%	3	20.0%	2
		Comment is not required	0	Comment is not required	0	Comment is not required	0
		answered question	13	answered question	16	answered question	10
		skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
25	Do you feel that a blitz attack on vacant abandoned or unoccupied properties require fire departments to remain on the scene longer?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	10.0%	1
	b. No	92.3%	12	100.0%	16	90.0%	9
		Comment is not required	0	Comment is not required	0	Comment is not required	0
		answered question	13	answered question	16	answered question	10
		skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
26	Do you feel that a defense attack on vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structures require fire departments to remain on the scene longer?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	53.8%	7	43.8%	7	70.0%	7
	b. No	46.2%	6	56.2%	9	30.0%	3
		Comment is not required	1	Comment is not required	0	Comment is not required	0
		answered question	13	answered question	16	answered question	10
		skipped question	0	skipped question	0	skipped question	0

Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:
1	11/10/2008 12:39:00	In my mind, firefighter safety is a more important consideration than time-on-scene.

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters			
27 Why do you feel fire department's use offensive attack on vacant and/or abandoned properties?									
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Count		
a. Tradition	30.8%	4	16.8%	3	50.0%	5			
b. No SOP or SOG for dealing with vacant, abandoned	7.7%	1	37.5%	6	20.0%	2			
c. To get companies back in service sooner	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0			
d. Officers do not consider firefighters risk	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0			
e. None of the above	23.1%	3	16.8%	3	0.0%	0			
f. All of the above	30.8%	4	25.0%	4	50.0%	5			
Comment is not required:		2	Comment is not required:		3	Comment is not required:		1	
answered question		13	answered question		18	answered question		10	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question		0	
1	11/10/2008 15:37:00	because as a company officer, if I was to use a "blitz attack" I would believe the fire could be extinguished.							
2	11/12/2008 19:36:00	again the question assumes the building is known to be unoccupied and a ff can not determine if to be unoccupied until he confirms it on scene							
3	11/18/2008 15:38:00	Our job is to save lives and property							
FF	1	11/20/2008 15:40:00	IT DEPENDS ON WHERE YOU WORK... SOME ARE TRYING TO JOCKEY A SPOT HIGHER ON THE FOOD CHAIN (PROMOTIONS) AT OUR EXPENSE (i.e., THE WILL LOOK WEAK IF THEY ARE ALWAYS GOING DEFEN						

Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:
1	11/09/2008 11:58:00	TO PUT OUT THE FIRE
2	11/10/2008 12:44:00	A, B, and D are all factors, in my opinion.

28 Where are most firefighters killed in the line of duty in the United State of America?									
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Count		
a. Commercial building fires	0.0%	0	16.8%	3	10.0%	1			
b. High-rise apartment building fires	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0			
c. Vacant, abandoned or unoccupied structure fires	30.8%	4	0.0%	0	30.0%	2			
d. In route to and from the fire grounds	69.2%	9	83.2%	13	60.0%	6			
Comment is not required:		1	Comment is not required:		1	Comment is not required:		0	
answered question		13	answered question		18	answered question		10	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question		0	
1	11/10/2008 12:44:00	Actually, annually, most firefighters die from some type of cardio-vascular event, regardless of location. Vehicle crashes are the second-leading cause, year-in and year-out.							
C	1	11/09/2008 13:20:00	Thirty-eight firefighters died while engaged in activities at the scene of a fire in 2007. USFA						

29 Should there be a vacant, abandoned or unoccupied SOP or SOG?								
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Count	
a. Yes	92.3%	12	75.0%	12	50.0%	4		
b. No	7.7%	1	25.0%	4	50.0%	1		
Comment is not required:		0	Comment is not required:		2	Comment is not required:		0
answered question		13	answered question		18	answered question		10
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question		0

30 If yes, who do you feel should be responsible for creating this policy?									
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Count		
a. Chief Officers	38.5%	5	43.8%	7	40.0%	4			
b. Company Officers	15.4%	2	12.5%	2	20.0%	2			
c. On-line Firefighters	0.0%	0	6.3%	1	0.0%	0			
d. Training School	38.5%	5	18.8%	3	30.0%	2			
f. N/A	0.0%	0	11.3%	2	10.0%	1			
e. Fire Prevention	7.7%	1	6.3%	1	0.0%	0			
Comment is not required:		2	Comment is not required:		0	Comment is not required:		1	
answered question		13	answered question		18	answered question		10	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question		0	
1	11/10/2008 12:44:00	It must come from and be supported from the top down, and all levels should have input when formulating this type of policy - assists with buy-in.							
2	11/18/2008 14:38:00	All the above							
FF	1	11/20/2008 15:40:00	I THINK THERE SHOULD BE INPUT FROM ALL ASPECTS OF FIRE DEPARTMENT. THERE ARE MANY REASONS THIS IS IMPORTANT. TOO MANY TIMES WE ARE GIVEN ORDERS TO DO THINGS THAT SHOULD BE A						

31 Do you feel there has been an increase in the number of vacant house fires this year for your department?									
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Count		
a. Yes	100.0%	10	100.0%	10	60.0%	6			
b. No	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	20.0%	2			
Comment is not required:		0	Comment is not required:		5	Comment is not required:		1	
answered question		10	answered question		15	answered question		10	
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question		0	
1	11/10/2008 15:39:00	It seems to increase every year. We live in an aging community where the population is decreasing.							
2	11/10/2008 15:40:00	copper pipe thieves.							
3	11/18/2008 15:30:00	The past several years							
FF	1	11/17/2008 12:01:00	Foreclosure rates						

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
33	Should there be a local policy that regulates when the utilities can be left on in a vacant or abandoned unit?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	92.3%	12	87.5%	14	100.0%	10
	b. No	7.7%	1	12.5%	2	0.0%	0
	Comment not required:	0		Comment not required:	1	Comment not required:	0
	answered question		13	answered question	16	answered question	10
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0
1	11/10/2008 15:40:00	gas needs to be shut off as soon as a house is truly vacant.					

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
33	Do you feel that the local city government has a plan for dealing with the increasing number of vacant units?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	23.1%	3	31%	5	20.0%	2
	b. No	76.9%	10	69.0%	11	80.0%	8
	Comment not required:	0		Comment not required:	0	Comment not required:	1
	answered question		13	answered question	16	answered question	10
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0
1	11/20/2008 15:42:00	REPEAT QUESTION...					

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
34	Do you feel that gas should be left on in a vacant unit to protect the pipes during the cold weather (winter season)?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	15.4%	2	25.0%	4	30.0%	3
	b. No	84.6%	11	75.0%	12	70.0%	7
	Comment not required:	0		Comment not required:	2	Comment not required:	2
	answered question		13	answered question	16	answered question	10
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0
1	11/20/2008 15:39:00	There is too much scrapping going on and it leaves those utilities vulnerable.					
2	11/15/2008 12:28:00	IT DEPENDS					
1	11/11/2008 10:52:00	IT DEPENDS ON THE BUILDING AND WHETHER OR NOT IT WILL BE WINTERIZED OR REOCCUPIED IN FUTURE IN TIMELY MANNER					
2	11/20/2008 15:42:00	THEY CAN WINTERIZE THE HOUSE AND TRUTHFULLY THE PIPES WONT LAST LONG ANYWAY WITH THE THEVES					

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
35	Do you feel that electric should be left on to protect the vacant unit?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	23.1%	3	31.3%	5	20.0%	2
	b. No	76.9%	10	68.7%	11	80.0%	8
	Comment not required:	0		Comment not required:	2	Comment not required:	3
	answered question		13	answered question	16	answered question	10
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0
1	11/10/2008 15:40:00	Only if the owner is using it to light the property, if not then why have it on.					
2	11/19/2008 12:31:00	ALSO DEPENDS					
1	11/11/2008 10:54:00	SAME AS #34					

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
36	Do you feel that a utility being left on adds to the hazards firefighters face during a vacant house fire?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	100.0%	13	87.5%	14	70.0%	7
	b. No	0.0%	0	12.5%	2	30.0%	3
	Comment is not required:	0		Comment is not required:	1	Comment is not required:	1
	answered question		13	answered question	16	answered question	10
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0
1	11/19/2008 12:31:00	BUT ALL HOUSES SHOULD BE TREATED AS IF THEY ARE ALL STILL ON					
1	11/11/2008 10:54:00	IT CAN BUT NOT NECESSARILY SO					

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
37	Do you feel that the city (local government) should demolish abandoned properties after it has not been used for over three years?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	30.8%	4	62.5%	10	60.0%	6
	b. No	69.2%	9	37.5%	6	40.0%	4
	Comment is not required:	3		Comment is not required:	2	Comment is not required:	0
	answered question		13	answered question	16	answered question	10
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0
1	11/09/2008 11:21:00	PROPERTY OWNERS HAVE RIGHTS TO KEEP THEIR PROPERTY					
2	11/10/2008 12:45:00	Likely there is a better way to deal with these occupancies other than demolition.					
3	11/10/2008 14:40:00	Depends on condition and construction type					
1	11/12/2008 20:08:00	the time that a structure is not important, the soundness of the structure is.					
2	11/13/2008 12:31:00	COULD BE TIED UP IN PROBATE					

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
38	Are you familiar with other department's vacant units SOP or SOG?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	23.1%	3	31.3%	5	10.0%	1
	b. No	76.9%	10	68.7%	11	90.0%	9
	Comment is not required:	0		Comment is not required:	0	Comment is not required:	0
	answered question		13	answered question	16	answered question	10
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
39	Do you feel a fully involved abandoned house fire should be allowed to burn to the ground with exposures protected?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	84.0%	11	87.5%	14	50.0%	5
	b. No	16.0%	2	12.5%	2	50.0%	1
	Comment is not required.	0		Comment is not required.	2	Comment is not required.	0
	answered question	13		answered question	16	answered question	16
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0
Lt.	1 11/09/2008 13:21:00	Safety					
	2 11/10/2008 15:42:00	not if it can be safely extinguished					

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
40	Have you been present at a vacant house fire where a firefighter has been injured?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	42.9%	11	75.0%	11	50.0%	5
	b. No	57.1%	15	25.0%	4	50.0%	5
	Comment is not required.	0		Comment is not required.	3	Comment is not required.	0
	answered question	13		answered question	16	answered question	16
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0
Lt.	1 11/09/2008 13:26:00	company officers lacking wisdom (seniority)					

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
41	Have you been at a fire where someone was still in the abandoned or vacant unit on your arrival?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	57.1%	7	56.3%	9	60.0%	6
	b. No	42.9%	6	43.8%	7	40.0%	4
	Comment is not required.	0		Comment is not required.	1	Comment is not required.	0
	answered question	13		answered question	16	answered question	16
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0
Lt.	1 11/10/2008 14:46:00	HOMELESS FOLKS					

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
42	Have you been at an abandoned or vacant house fire where someone died at the scene?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	15.4%	2	100%	0	10.0%	1
	b. No	84.6%	11	0.0%	0	90.0%	9
	Comment is not required.	0		Comment is not required.	0	Comment is not required.	0
	answered question	13		answered question	16	answered question	16
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters	
43	Do you feel that the department has taken the necessary steps to ensure your safety at vacant units?						
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	46.2%	6	37.5%	6	50.0%	5
	b. No	53.8%	7	62.5%	10	50.0%	5
	Comment is not required.	1		Comment is not required.	1	Comment is not required.	2
	answered question	13		answered question	16	answered question	16
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0	skipped question	0
Lt.	1 11/10/2008 15:41:00	We seem to be growing more and more cautious at fires involving vacant structures.					

Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:
1	11/10/2008 12:47:00	My department is reactive rather than proactive - it will most likely require a tragic event (or near event) for them to react to this threat.
1	11/10/2008 12:27:00	A WORK IN PROGRESS.
2	11/11/2008 19:53:00	AS BEST AS POSSIBLY CAN BE.

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants	
44	Do you feel that the department has taken the necessary steps to ensure your safety at abandoned units?				
	Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
	a. Yes	38.5%	5	54.3%	5
	b. No	61.5%	8	45.7%	11
	Comment is not required.	0		Comment is not required.	0
	answered question	13		answered question	16
	skipped question	0		skipped question	0

		Captains & Chiefs		Lieutenants		Firefighters		
Do you feel that the department has taken the necessary steps to ensure your safety at unoccupied units?								
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count		
a. Yes	51.9%	7	52.0%	8	40.0%	4		
b. No	48.2%	6	48.0%	8	60.0%	6		
Comment is not required:		0	Comment is not required:		0	Comment is not required:		0
answered question		13	answered question		16	answered question		10
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question		0

With the proper training, should firefighters take the responsibility to inspect and establish placards hazard levels for vacant units in their district?								
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count		
a. Yes	61.5%	8	62.5%	10	60.0%	6		
b. No	38.5%	5	37.5%	6	40.0%	4		
Comment is not required:		2	Comment is not required:		1	Comment is not required:		1
answered question		13	answered question		16	answered question		10
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question		0

Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:
1	11/09/2006 14:24:00	ONLY IF THE CITY DOES NOT HAVE ANOTHER DEPT. TO DO THE JOB
2	11/18/2006 14:46:00	not placard but info should be given to those who may respond to the location
1	11/09/2006 13:30:00	building department
1	11/11/2006 19:57:00	IF TIME WOULD ALLOW AND THEY HAVE SOME WAY OF BEING NOTIFIED BUILDING IS ACTUALLY EMPTY, VACANT AND UNOCCUPIED

Do you feel your department need to provide awareness training on how to deal with vacant, abandoned or unoccupied properties in your community?								
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count		
a. Yes	84.6%	11	92.4%	15	80.0%	8		
b. No	15.4%	2	6.8%	1	20.0%	2		
Comment is not required:		1	Comment is not required:		1	Comment is not required:		0
answered question		13	answered question		14	answered question		10
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question		0

Number	Response Date	Comment is not required:
1	11/09/2006 13:21:00	COMPANY OFFICERS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO LEARN THEIR DISTRICTS AND BECOME AWARE OF THESE BUILDINGS AND ACT ACCORDINGLY
1	11/10/2006 15:41:00	Any training is good training

What is your current rank or title on your department?								
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count		
a. Firefighter	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	100.0%	10		
b. Lieutenant	0.0%	0	100.0%	10	0.0%	0		
c. Captain	69.2%	9	0.0%	0	0.0%	0		
d. District Chief	23.1%	3	0.0%	0	0.0%	0		
e. Deputy Chief	7.7%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0		
f. Chief	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0		
g. Other	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0		
Comment is not required:		0	Comment is not required:		1	Comment is not required:		0
answered question		13	answered question		10	answered question		10
skipped question		0	skipped question		0	skipped question		0