

Call Firefighter Training – Venting – June 2024

Captain Andrew Stevens led the call firefighter training session for June 2024, which covered venting a structure fire. The session was held at CFD's new training site at the far end of the DPW property, where the department recently acquired two empty shipping containers donated by the owner of Claremont Motorsports Park.



The trucks brought over for the session – Engine 3 and Ladder 2 – store ladders in three full-extended lengths of 14, 16 and 33 feet. Stevens explained that the height of the structure on fire – based on each story measuring 10 feet – determines which ladder or ladders to offload and set up.



Stevens demonstrated the ideal, that only one person needs to handle a ladder.



For this initial training, the call firefighters, dressed in full gear, teamed up to carry and set up the ladders.



Some got one-on-one coaching.

Once firefighters are on the roof of a burning building, they cut into it to provide venting. Venting is critical, because it allows the smoke and gases to escape because heat and smoke rise. It makes it easier for firefighters to see and find the source of the fire, reduces the possibilities of backdraft and flashover, and increases the chance of survival for anyone trapped in the structure.

Stevens described the three saws, rotary and chain, that are always stored on the trucks and for which type of roofing material each would be used.



Lieutenant William Hardy sketched out a "7-9-8" cut (aka a "coffin cut"), a typical flat-roof cut. The first cuts are made to form a "7"; the next cuts form a "9"; the final cuts are made in the shape of an "8," or a rectangular "coffin-shape" hole.



Each call firefighter practiced cutting pallets, learning to pull the saw toward their bodies (and not reaching forward) for maximum control. Another training tip: Do not apply the saw's brake when it's running at full force, as this could damage the blade; instead, switch down to idle and then apply the brake.



At the conclusion of the session, Stevens noted that the department hopes to get a third "box" (i.e. another container). It would be put on top of one of the other two to create a "second story," and stairs would be built to make a more challenging, real-life setting when the department schedules a controlled burn at the site.