

# Maintaining Integrity of the Door

by Battalion Chief Nicholas Santangelo

There have been many contributing factors in the deaths of Firefighters in the past several years. Some of the most common ones are *water loss, building construction* and *maintaining integrity of the door*.

Members must realize that the present-day Firefighter is much better equipped and today's fires are much hotter due to synthetic combustible materials and thermopane windows. These factors force members to reinforce and/or adjust some basic firefighting tactics.

The decision to employ an offensive or defensive strategy and supporting tactics is dependent upon an accurate, ongoing size-up of the fire. Even though members are constantly sizing up the incident, there are some critical thresholds--such as arriving at the entrance door to the fire area--where the fire situation is re-evaluated. For example, this may be the apartment door in a multiple dwelling or a bedroom door in a private dwelling.

As with all forcible entry, door control is critical. A Firefighter must be ready to control the door with a tool. The company Officer also must make decisions to control the door and whether to have a member positioned there.



**This door should not be left unattended.** photo courtesy of Battalion Chief Nicholas Santangelo

When high heat and/or heavy smoke are encountered, the door should *not* be left unattended and *not* opened to release smoke or heat. The only time the door is opened is for entry, egress, to advance a hose-line or call out to a disoriented Firefighter.

Besides confining the fire, keeping the door closed also controls the air drafted by the fire. For example, when a search team enters the fire area to search, members would close the door and leave one Firefighter to:

- Maintain the integrity of the door.
- Assist in getting the hose-line into position.
- Alert the search team to changes in fire conditions.
- Assist in victim/Firefighter removal.
- Guide search team back to the door.

This member would wedge a tool

Members are urged to review the following articles in this issue of WNYF:

- "Units Battle Stubborn, Windswept Cockloft Fire in Queens," by Deputy Chief Mark Cuccurullo and Battalion Chief Vincent Mavaro, on page 6.
- "Wind-Driven Queens Fire Provokes Several *Maydays*," by Deputy Chief James D. Daly, Jr., and Battalion Chief George Healy on page 10.

or hang the hook on the top of the door or extend the deadbolt lock to prevent the door from re-locking. Also, he/she would leave the rabbit tool outside in the hall to mark the location of the fire or to be used to open other doors in the public hall. While the door's integrity is maintained, the other members of the search team proceed to search for life, location of the fire and vent for visibility and heat removal as necessary. It also may be more effective and safer when only two members are searching, especially if the third member is dragging an extinguisher and hook.

Remember, a severe fire in a fireproof multiple dwelling necessitates opening another apartment door for an area of refuge. Open a door *only* on the same side as the fire apartment. This prevents the heat and fire from being drawn across the hallway. This should be considered in any type of building when the wind could adversely affect the fire when windows fail.

If control of the door to the fire area cannot be maintained, this fact must be communicated to the Incident Commander and all units. Loss of integrity of a door was a contributing factor in at least 12 FDNY Firefighter fatalities in the past 20 years.

*This article is dedicated to the memory of Lieutenant James Curran, President of the New York Firefighters Burn Center Foundation, who continuously strived to make the inherently dangerous job of firefighting a safer one.*



### About the Author...

Battalion Chief Nicholas Santangelo is a 28-year veteran of the FDNY. For the past six years, he has been the Chief of the Fire Academy. He previously served as Executive Officer from 1999 to 2000. As a Captain, he served with Engine Company 80. He served as a Lieutenant in Engine Company 88 and as a Firefighter in Ladder Company 104. He writes regularly for WNYF.



## Taking Up

May 1-July 31, 2006



**Chief of Department**  
Peter E. Hayden COD

**Deputy Chief**  
John H. Bambury Division 8

**Battalion Chiefs**  
Gary K. Connelly Battalion 12  
James M. Keene Battalion 3  
Peter M. Stuebe Battalion 18

**Captains**  
William R. Abruzzese Division 7  
Anthony D. Dabnis Division 15  
George R. Finnin, Jr. Ladder 29  
Brian F. Gorman Ladder 122  
John Lombardi Ladder 158  
Thomas J. O'Brien (3) Squad 18

Edward F. Pellikan, Jr.  
Eric Sands

**Lieutenants**  
Paul G. Arias  
Joseph R. Astarita  
John W. Boyle (2)  
Edmund J. Carroll  
Lawrence M. Cohen  
Michael Cuttino  
Joseph B. DiMartino  
Patrick D. Duignan  
Thomas F. Faherty  
Lawrence J. Famiglietti  
Scott M. Farrington  
Frank Fiorino

ADMHS  
Engine 287

Engine 226  
Engine 166  
Ladder 38  
Battalion 47  
Battalion 18  
Ladder 164  
Engine 294  
Engine 71  
Ladder 153  
Engine 295  
Engine 5  
Ladder 159

Patrick H. Fitzsimmons  
David J. Fullam  
Steven M. Gambardella  
John J. Halpin  
Michael J. Kross  
Joseph T. McMahon  
Ella McNair  
Thomas P. Melia  
Ernesto Nieves, Jr.  
Frank J. Papalia  
Cesar Rivera  
Andrew J. Rosina  
Charles Vanchieri  
Robert J. Wallen

Ladder 77  
Ladder 21  
Battalion 48  
Ladder 33  
Engine 16  
Engine 319  
Battalion 37  
Engine 222  
Ladder 161  
Ladder 2  
Battalion 3  
Engine 94  
Battalion 15  
Engine 151

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Henry W. White	Battalion 39
John L. Zanat	Engine 64
<b>Fire Marshals</b>	
Michael J. Brancato	Bronx Base
Louis M. Pecora	Bronx Base
<b>Marine Engineer</b>	
Timothy P. Goss	Marine 1
<b>Pilot</b>	
Martin J. Accardi	Marine 6
<b>Firefighters</b>	
Florentino Agosto	Engine 45
John B. Arias	Engine 254
Victor Armaniaco	Ladder 34
Steven A. Bascelli	Ladder 26
Mario K. Bell	Engine 9
Jeffrey B. Borkowski	Haz-Mat 1
William R. Boyce	Ladder 150
James G. Brady	Engine 58
Gregory A. Brann	Engine 90
Michael J. Brown	Engine 72
Timothy W. Butts	Engine 71
Glen T. Cairney	Engine 165
Dominic J. Cassase	Ladder 39
James G. Cosgrove	Engine 320
Edmund P. Costigan	Ladder 158
Todd C. DeMayo	Ladder 85

Jerry A. DeMeo	Battalion 37
Kevin J. Dillon	Ladder 131
Bryan P. Edgar	Engine 311
Gerald C. Farina	Engine 289
Bernard J. Floody	Ladder 176
Richard J. Ford	Ladder 142
Robert J. Fraumeni	Ladder 147
Stanley Freedner	Engine 72
Patrick J. Garvey	Ladder 49
Gilbert Gomez	Engine 67
Michael J. Graham	Engine 304
Gerald H. Hart	Engine 45
Patrick J. Higgins	Ladder 56
Joseph V. Jablonski	Ladder 28
David P. Johnsen	Engine 239
Brian K. Jones	Ladder 45
Mark Leicht	Engine 82
Robert Lorenz	Ladder 61
Gary S. Lyons	Engine 329
Stephen A. Lyons	Ladder 7
Philip Martini	Engine 72
Garry Maurice	Ladder 161
Kevin M. McAdams	Ladder 45
Harry J. McCabe	Engine 326
Kevin J. McGovern	Engine 230
Sam G. Melisi	Rescue 2
Michael F. Messineo	Engine 291

Elio A. Moschetta	Engine 64
Keith S. Murphy	Engine 47
Francis J. Nastro	Ladder 170
Joseph T. O'Brien	Engine 91
William J. Oettinger	Ladder 135
Linda J. Pedersen	Engine 159
John C. Peretti	Engine 314
Thomas J. Plackis	Engine 320
Russell W. Post	Engine 72
Daniel G. Quirke	Ladder 168
Michael B. Rafferty	Engine 258
James G. Ritchie	Engine 317
John R. Rogers	Engine 165
Kevin J. Ryan	Ladder 175
Daniel J. Salsedo	Engine 326
Edwin Santiago	Ladder 41
Arthur A. Sartini	Engine 254
Joseph A. Siminski	Engine 282
Leonard W. Smit	Ladder 79
Michael P. Sullivan	Ladder 38
Patrick J. Sullivan	Engine 162
John P. Sullivan (4)	Engine 299
William M. Thurlow	Ladder 40
Edward H. Tomaszewski	Haz-Mat 1
Mitchell A. Tropin	Battalion 52
Charles L. Wahren	Ladder 101
Nicholas Wowk	Engine 316

Museum has started the ball rolling for a major ceremony at the museum and in downtown Phoenix at Wesley Bolen Plaza, the state capitol. Tentative arrangements have been made and the Brothers will assemble at the museum on Monday morning, September 11, where all 343 names will be read, as well as being accompanied by pipers and a religious ceremony. From there, a huge contingent of fire apparatus will parade to Phoenix and a steel uncovering ceremony will take place at 11:30 a.m. with Governor Janet Napolitano heading up the dignitaries. Check out [www.hallofflame.org](http://www.hallofflame.org) and see what the largest firefighting museum looks like...The FDNY Retirees, Phoenix Division, picked a great day to visit one of their members in Sedona. The first 100-degree day of the year hit on May 11 and the guys took the 110-mile trip to see John Rizzi E-235 and wife, Carol. The red rocks of Sedona surround their hacienda and the views are spectacular. Brothers taking the trip north were Dennis Burke, Paul Chance, Jim Conmy, Lou DePasquale, Jim Donnelly, Mick Ennis, Ray Maione, Marty McGovern, Tom Merkel, Rod Pace, Joe Pecoraro and Marc Williams...On Monday, May 8, 2006, a groundbreaking ceremony was held at Wesley Bolen Plaza in Phoenix with Governor Janet Napolitano and many dignitaries taking the first step for a 9/11 Memorial. The one-of-a kind memorial will be ready by September 11, 2006, at a cost of \$500,000. The Retirees will be at that ceremony in full force. Check out the progress at [www.az911memorial.com](http://www.az911memorial.com)... Brother Jim Donnelly and wife, Gina, are coordinating a cruise out of Los Angeles in early October. The trip will be four nights, with stops at San Diego, Catalina Island and Ensenada, Mexico. This will be a first for the Phoenix Retirees and a good time is anticipated by all...Brothers John Rizzi and Bill Kelleher are recovering from heart procedures and both are improving daily...The FDNY Retirees, Phoenix Division, wish everyone a safe and happy summer and hope everyone is in place for the fifth anniversary of 9/11...Jerry Sanford reports in from Florida. As most of us know, retired Captain Tom Brennan passed away on April 20, 2006. Tom was a member of Gulfcoast Retired Firefighters Association and was regarded as one of the most important fire service educators of his generation. A number of retired members attended his wake in Cape Coral. He will be greatly missed by all...Now to some better news. Twenty-five couples attended a

Valentine's Day dinner/dance at St. John's the Evangelist Church in February. A great time was had by all...Approximately 60 Brothers marched in the annual St. Patrick's Day parade on March 18th, led up the avenue by a beautiful bagpiper, Ms. Maddy King. After the parade, the Brothers all went to the local VFW and had a delicious corned beef and cabbage dinner. Great stuff...And, finally, they were challenged by the NYPD 10-13 club in Naples to a bocci tournament. FDNY shut them out in the fall, three games to none and again in February, three games to none. The score so far is Firefighters 2; cops 0...Las Vegas reports in and tells us that the hotel/casino New York New York every year sponsors a parade and party for local fire departments and FDNY retirees are included. Las Vegas sends a few pieces and there is a short parade and memorial by the fireboat. Any FDNY member--active or retired--is invited to join in this if they are in Vegas at that time. If anyone is interested, contact Pat Miller at [miller@pahump.com](mailto:miller@pahump.com)...Central Florida Retirees had their 1st annual dinner/dance in Palm Coast in February and it was a huge success, thanks to Brothers Don Meinsen and John McDonald and Brother Charlie Sterry and his bride, Jan, for making the centerpieces for the tables...Rumor has it that the wives are conspiring to get the old guys dancing lessons, thanks to Brothers John Fatta Haz Mat and bride, Judy, and Vinnie Julius and bride, Martha, who were doing their impression of Fred and Ginger...President Rich Gander L-127 and 12th Division was busy taking pictures for the Housewatch and web site, FDNYGONESOUTH...Brother Howie Dugan and bride, Mary, were the highlight of the evening, celebrating their 57th wedding anniversary. Who were those three bomberos who showed up in their tuxedos? Comments were, when and where are we going to do this again?...March 15th was the date for the annual St. Pat's party at the Deland Moose Lodge. Food was good and the friends were even better. Joining in were friends of Brother Fatta, Ed Walsh L-158 and Jack Tipping R-4 and L-164. By the way, Brother Tipping presented Brother Fatta with a genuine Irish beret, complete with hairpiece. He was unaware he had hair...Brother Bob Mauro L-103 actually wore a patch of green on his motorcycle leather...May 20 was Central Florida Retirees annual picnic at Oak Hill, Florida, and was superbly hosted by Brother John Fatta and wife, Judy. The highlight of the picnic was the arrival of a 1932 vin-

tage pumper, driven by Brother George Hartmann...Because of the absence of the regular "beermeister," Brother Curley enlisted the aid of his long-time buddy from Port St. Lucie, Brother Roger "big red" Wallman L-117 and L-166. Don't know if it was the weather or a great thirst, but the barrel ran out and Brother Jack Carroll had to make a "run" for more. Thanks to the many volunteers--too many to mention--who made this event special. Brother Vinnie Julius celebrated his 79th birthday at the affair and was instrumental in cutting the cake. Also on hand were Brother Frank Reising and wife, Edna, celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary...Have a happy and safe summer...Del Mar, California --The San Diego County Fair was the site for the New York epic Battle of the Badges Boxing matches. The boxing matches were between members of the NYPD and the FDNY. Firehouse Brewing and the San Diego County Fair sponsored the participants. Outdoors in 78-degree heat, 14 boxers fought seven matches in front of approximately 800 enthusiastic fans. Each boxer was matched with another boxer in the same weight category. It was the Firefighters against the police, the red corner (fire) against the blue corner (police) of the ring. Both teams entered the ring together to officially start this athletic event. A moment of silence for their fallen Brothers and Sisters, then the singing of the national anthem started things off. Three members of the FDNY boxing team were killed on September 11, 2001. Danny Noonan, a long-time resident of San Diego and a retired FDNY member, acted as the master of ceremonies. His distinctive New York accent and quips added to the color of the boxing matches...President Gerry Coffman of the Broward County Retirees reports that they are running an eastern Caribbean cruise, leaving from Ft. Lauderdale on February 4 and returning on February 11, 2007.

The 4th/2006 issue of WNYF is slated for distribution in December 2006.