

432 Park Avenue

By Deputy Chief Nicholas Corrado



Mega Tower. At 1,443 feet, 432 Park Avenue is the second tallest building in New York City and dwarfs its neighboring buildings.

Editor's Note: This column is the first in a series of columns that will be devoted to the seven tallest buildings currently in New York City. The author, Deputy Chief Nicholas Corrado, will advise members regarding oddities/dangers in each building and how to operate efficiently, effectively and safely in each.

Currently, there are seven buildings in New York City that are more than 1000 feet tall: Freedom Tower, the tallest, serves as an ever-present reminder of the bravery of our members; the iconic Empire State Building; the Chrysler Building, first in the world to rise above 1000 feet; One57, the tallest, mixed-use occupancy (residential and hotel); and the Bank of America and New York Times buildings. The seventh, 432 Park Avenue, is the newest in New York City's changing skyline. These buildings pose unique challenges to FDNY and members must be vigilant in maintaining the necessary skills to battle high-rise commercial and residential fires.

Located between 56th and 57th Streets, 432 Park Avenue currently is the second tallest building in New York City. Rising 1443 feet, it is an 85-story, 96- by 96-foot, fireproof, cast-in-place concrete, residential building. Though it has a Park Avenue address, the entrance will be on 56th Street, between Park and Madison Avenues. It has a core-type construction with five elevators, four destination passenger cars and one service car running the

entire height of the building. The destination elevators have a keypad to enter the desired floor through a locked hatch in the car, which is opened by a 1620 key. There are two separate, enclosed stairs; A on the west side of the building and B on the east side. At the 12th floor, A and B stairs converge, becoming scissor stairs that run the height of the building.

Members should understand the differences between the terms, construction and marketing floors. Buildings under construction have their street-level floor designated as the first floor and continue sequentially, inclusive of floor 13. Marketing floors should be thought of as how the floors of the building will be designated once occupied. Marketing floors may not coincide with construction floors. Once occupied, the top floor of 432 Park will be designated the 98th floor, though the building has only 85 levels. There are no marketing floors designated six through 11, 22 through 27, nor floors 13, 17, 32, 33 or 76.

Construction hoists maintained in readiness for the Fire Department will provide access to the sequentially numbered construction floors. Floor designation for stairways will indicate construction floors until the construction is complete. As building construction progresses toward obtaining a certificate of occupancy, passenger and service elevators and fire alarm systems are installed and programmed using marketing floors. It is im-

Construction Floor	Marketing Floor	N1 Xront (East)	N1 Rear (West)
81	98R		X
80	97R		X
79	96	X	
78	95	X	
77	94	X	
76	93	X	
75	92	X	
74	91	X	
73	90	X	
72	89	X	X
71	88	X	
70	87	X	X
69	86	X	X
68	85	X	
67	84	X	X
66	83	X	X
65	82	X	X
64	81	X	X
63	80	X	X
62	79	X	X
61	78	X	X
60	77	X	X
59	75	X	X
58	74	X	X
57	73	X	X
56	72	X	X
55	71	X	X
54	70	X	X
53	69	X	X
52	68	X	X
51	67	X	X
50	66	X	X
49	65	X	X
48	64	X	X
47	63	X	X
46	62	X	X
45	61	X	X
44	60	X	X
43	59	X	X
42	58	X	X
41	57	X	X

Conversion Chart. 432 Park Avenue.

portant for units responding to a building that is in transition from construction to marketing to verify the kind of floor that is being reported. If not verified, companies may find themselves above the fire.

Construction personnel can provide conversion charts, indicating differences between floors. (See conversion chart.) These charts can be laminated and kept on apparatus and a request can be made to have them posted at the fire command station, elevators and elevator lobbies.

The following is one scenario indicating how units inadvertently might proceed above the fire floor. On arrival, units confirm an alarm panel activation for fire on the 60th floor. Alarm panels are programmed using marketing floors, while construction hoists access construction floors. The first ladder and engine companies use a passenger elevator to the 58th (marketing) floor. Subsequent companies use the construction hoist maintained in readiness and proceed to the 58th (construction) floor. The companies that used the construction hoist to access the 58th floor will have arrived on the 74th marketing floor, 14 floors above the fire floor.

This new high-rise will pose additional challenges for operating units. The transparent curtain wall and window design will negate the deployment of the fire curtain and high-rise nozzle. Engine chauffeurs must locate and supply the correct standpipe siamese. There are three standpipe

risers in this building, serving separate zones, designated as low, mid and high. The low-rise standpipe supplies floors one through 35. The mid-rise standpipe supplies floors 36 through 64. The high-rise standpipe supplies floors 65 through 98. Each of the three risers has three separate siameses located on 56th Street, 57th Street and Park Avenue.

There are seven fire pumps and 12 water tanks—ranging from 11,500 to 15,000 gallons—located on several different floors. Though the standpipe/sprinkler system is designed to supply adequate water pressures for firefighting, chauffeurs should be aware that some issues may arise. If fire is confirmed on the 65th floor, the mid-rise siamese must be connected first, since the mid-rise standpipe supplies floors 36 through 64 and Department Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) require members to connect to the standpipe outlet one floor below the fire floor.

Also, chauffeurs must take into account that each floor is constructed with a height of 15.5 feet. In this building, the 50th floor has an elevation of 637 feet above street level. An elevation chart can be obtained from construction personnel, laminated and kept on apparatus to help members determine appropriate pump pressures. All members should review chapter 9 of Engine Operations and recall that the Incident Commander (IC) shall be notified when pump pressures above 250 psi are necessary.

Additional “mega-high-rise” buildings are being built or planned in the City. Fire fatalities City-wide continue to decrease due, in part, to fire prevention performed by field units. Units should continue to use these inspections, 90-day familiarization drills and multi-unit drills (MUD) to identify some of the unique characteristics mentioned in this article, as well as additional concerns in these new buildings. Officers should use these opportunities to revise Critical Information Dispatch System (CIDS), check access points into construction areas and plan apparatus positioning.

Author’s Note: Members are urged to review “Scissor Stairs Review,” by then-Battalion Chief Orio J. Palmer (killed on September 11th), in the 4th/97 issue of WNYF. ■

About the Author:



Deputy Chief Nicholas Corrado has served the FDNY since 1991. He is assigned to Division 3. This is the first edition of WNYF that features his articles.

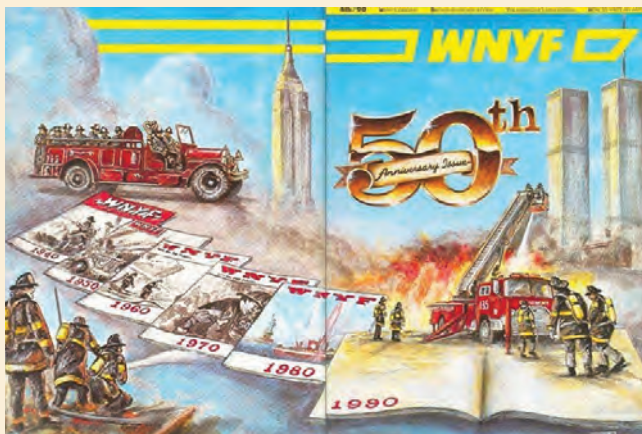


First WNYF magazine cover. The first cover of WNYF featured the aftermath of the January 1903 Fayerweather Ladew fire in Manhattan.

MENTIONING LONDON!

WE ALL REALIZE that London at present is a Fireman’s laboratory, especially in connection with incendiary fires. This is precisely the reason why three members of our Department are now studying the situation there. They will observe all the fire hazards connected with modern aerial warfare, the peculiarities of such fires and the best means of combating them. A study will also be made of the complete set-up of the auxiliary fire fighting force

75 Years Ago! As London endured German airstrikes, FDNY sent members overseas to learn tactics from the London Fire Brigade.



Looking back at Golden Anniversary. Wraparound 1990 cover prominently displayed the World Trade Center and WNYF magazine covers over the decades. The cover art was created by Firefighter Russ Poore.

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