



# FIRE PROTECTION TRAINING

Procedures Handbook 4300

WILDLAND FIRES

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**TOPIC:** WILDLAND FIRE STRATEGY

**TIME FRAME:** :15

**LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION:** Level I

**BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE:**

*Condition:* Given a written or oral examination

*Behavior:* The student will list and describe the different strategies available for attacking a vegetation fire

*Standard:* With a minimum 80% accuracy

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- Writing board with markers/erasers
- Appropriate video equipment and screen

**REFERENCES:**

- Teie, (2005) Firefighter's Handbook on Wildland Firefighting, 3rd Edition, Chapter 6
- IFSTA, (2003) Wildland Firefighting for Structural Firefighters, 4th Edition, Chapter 6
- Wildland Firefighting, Clayton, Day, McFadden, Chapter 8

**PREPARATION:**

Upon arrival at a fire scene the initial attack incident commander has to size up the situation and decide on what type of attack to make to safely and effectively extinguish a vegetation fire. Failure to choose the proper strategy can have disastrous consequences in terms of life hazards and property damage.



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## PRESENTATION

## APPLICATION

**I. THERE ARE THREE (3) BASIC ATTACK METHODS USED ON WILDLAND FIRES, “DIRECT”, “INDIRECT” AND “PARALLEL”**

**A. Direct attack**

1. Involves working directly on the fire edge
2. This method has several advantages
  - a) Firefighters can escape to safety in burned areas
    - 1) The burn is generally considered the safest part of a fire
    - 2) “One Foot in the Black”
  - b) The fire is stopped with the least spread and minimum acreage burned
  - c) Full advantage is taken of burned-out areas along the control line
    - 1) Eliminates fuel at fires edge
  - d) Burning out is not necessary

What are three attack methods for wildland fires?

What is direct attack?

What would be an advantage to the direct attack?

What are some of the disadvantages of the direct attack?

4320.8

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3. Some of the disadvantages to the direct attack method are:
  - a) Personnel can be hampered by heat, smoke and flames
  - b) Control line can be long and irregular and must follow the fire edge
  - c) Does not take advantage of natural or existing "man-made" fire barriers
  - d) Not effective against fast moving hot fires
4. Direct attack tactics include:

**NOTE:** Hand out Information Sheet #1: 4320.8, Pincer Attack

- a) Pincer – direct attack around a fire in opposite directions by two or more fire control resources from an anchor point

**NOTE:** Hand out Information Sheet #2: 4320.8, Tandem Attack

- b) Tandem –direct attack anchored along a part of the fire perimeter by control resources following each other (can leap frog)

**NOTE:** Hand out Information Sheet #3: 4320.8, Envelopment

- c) Envelopment – control resources strike key or critical segments around the entire fire perimeter at approximately the same time from numerous anchor points

### B. Indirect attack

What is indirect attack?



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<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Involves working a considerable distance away from the fires edge</li><li>2. Used when:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Fire is burning too hot or rapidly to employ direct or parallel attack</li><li>b) There is insufficient resources for direct or parallel attack</li><li>c) Fuels and/or terrain make other attack methods unsafe or impractical</li></ol></li><li>3. Uses pre-existing roads, natural barriers, or constructed firelines ahead of the advancing main fire</li><li>4. The lines ahead of the fire are either burned out or held by ground and air resources and become the final control lines</li><li>5. The advantages of the indirect method of attack are:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Permits easier work for firefighters because of less smoke, heat, and flame contact</li><li>b) Can locate line along more favorable topography</li><li>c) Permits firefighters to take advantage of natural or pre-existing barriers</li><li>d) Can allow for more time to construct line</li><li>e) Can allow control lines to be constructed in lighter fuels</li></ol></li><li>6. The disadvantages of the indirect attack method are:</li></ol>	



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Fire can overrun firefighters working in unburned fuel</li><li>b) Fire may cross the fireline before fuels are burned out</li><li>c) Acreage burned is increased</li><li>d) Risk of burning operation escaping control</li><li>e) Fails to take advantage of line that has already burned out</li></ul> <p>C. Parallel attack</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Involves working a distance of 5 to 50 feet, or more, away from the fires edge</li><li>2. Used when:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Fire is burning too hot or rapidly to employ direct attack</li><li>b) Fingers of the fire make direct attack time consuming and impractical</li><li>c) Fuel and/or terrain make fires edge unworkable</li><li>d) Limited resources prevent direct attack</li><li>e) Lack of pre-existing barriers makes an indirect attack unviable</li></ul></li><li>3. Uses constructed fireline or burning out from a wetline for control</li></ul>	<p>What is parallel attack?</p>



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4. The advantages of the parallel method of attack are:
  - a) Permits easier work for firefighters because of less smoke, heat, and flame contact
  - b) Can reduce length of fires edge and shorten control lines by eliminating pockets and fingers
  - c) Maybe able to place control lines in lighter fuels
  - d) Usually shorter and straighter line
  
5. The disadvantages of the parallel attack method are:
  - a) Fire may cross fireline before it is burned out
  - b) Unburned fuel between suppression resources and the fire.
  - c) Acreage burned is increased
  - d) Risk of burning out operation escaping control
  
- D. Combination of all attack methods
  1. Be flexible ! If the direct attack is not working, be prepared to go to a parallel or indirect attack

Name some of the advantages of parallel attack

Name some of the disadvantages of parallel attack



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## ***SUMMARY:***

An incident commander needs to understand the advantages and disadvantages of direct, indirect, and parallel fire attack methods in order to decide when and where each should be used

## ***EVALUATION:***

The student will complete a written or oral exam at a time to be determined by the instructor

## ***ASSIGNMENT:***

Review your notes in order to prepare yourself for the upcoming exam