

Snapshot Size-Up #104



Roof Ventilation

Roof operations are as dangerous as they are necessary. The removal of smoke, heat and toxic gases from the structure can be the difference between life and death... and so can the method you use to open the roof. Even on a clear, calm, day, working on a pitched roof can be challenging, especially when the support of that roof may be compromised. When you add darkness or climate challenges (such as icy conditions or high winds) to the mix, opening a roof without taking appropriate safety precautions is a recipe for disaster.

Don't take any unnecessary chances when performing roof ventilation. Whenever possible, firefighters should work off the safety of a roof ladder, aerial or platform.



Deputy Chief Frank Viscuso is a twenty-year veteran of the fire service. He is a regular contributor to Fire Engineering Magazine & FireOpsOnline.com. He is also co-author of the book Fireground Operational Guides (PennWell 2011). The book features universal tactical worksheets and operational guides for more than 70 incidents that range from water, gas and electrical emergencies to multiple-alarm structure fires.