

DES fights 'fire' in Root Hall

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Imagine you are sitting in your seminar room at Root Hall, you notice that the trash can is on fire. You try to put it out, but instead of extinguishing, it spreads. So you vacate the room and call the fire department, who rushes over to fight the fire.

The problem is fighting a fire in a multi-story building like Root Hall, isn't easy, it is a logistical headache. That is why the Carlisle Barracks Fire Department practices, so if they have to do it for real, they are ready.

Firefighter Todd Hooper carries a high-rise pack into Root Hall as part of a DES training exercise held in Root Hall. The high-rise pack is a folded up hose that connects to a stairwell stand pipe, and is used in fighting fires in mutli-level commercial buildings.



“The Department of Emergency Services requires us to conduct a structural training drill and a combined exercise with the police and guards once a month,” said Carlisle Barracks Fire Chief James O’Connell.

On Oct. 21, the Carlisle Barracks Fire Department, along with the police department, conducted their monthly training exercise at Root Hall.

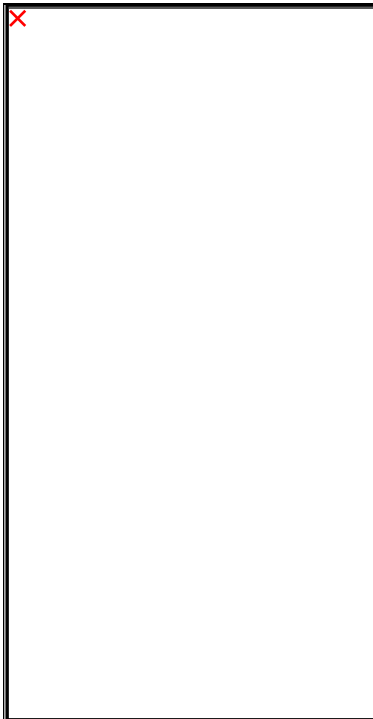
“This is the first time, since I have been here, that we have been able to use Root Hall for training,” said O’Connell. “This command group is really supportive of our training objectives.”

“The training objective was to have the responders arrive on the scene, enter the locked building, make

their way to the fire and then make an offensive attack using high-rise packs connected to the stairwell stand pipes,” said O’Connell.

“The hardest thing about fighting a fire in a multi-story building is man power,” said O’Connell. “It is tiring to get the hoses and other equipment up to the fire. Plus we only have one engine and four fire fighters on duty at once time, so we have to rely on other fire departments to help us out.”

Firefighter Todd Hooper agreed that the logistics of getting the equipment to the fire was the hardest thing.



A firefighter attaches a hose to a stand pipe connector, during a training exercise held in Root Hall.

“We are dropped off at the front of the building, and the fire truck is parked at the side of the building where the water is,” said Hooper.

“Then we have to carry all of our equipment up several flights of stairs and down the halls. So if we forgot something, like the keys to get in the building, it is a long walk back.”

Fortunately the firefighters brought all their equipment and the “fire” was put out with minimal damage to the room.

Since Carlisle Barracks relies on outside help with many of their emergencies, the DES is planning on holding a joint training exercise with other Carlisle area fire and rescue teams in the new future.