

Miller, Diane M. (CDC/NIOSH/EID)

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Sent: Thursday, January 08, 2009 11:40 AM
To: NIOSH Docket Office (CDC)
Cc: Chen, Jihong (Jane) (CDC/NIOSH/EID) (CTR)
Subject: 141 - FFUS Comments

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Comments

Our department has instituted a vacant building marking program which uses the city's buildings division inspectors and fire crews evaluating vacants in their districts on a semi annual basis. This program involves marking vacants and abandoned structures, has been in place for @ 18 months and is working well.

A problem seen in unoccupied dwelling fires is Departments performing defensive operations at the height of the fire and then placing fire companies at risk after overhaul operations begin and the fire is deemed under control. The same structure that was, minutes ago, being deluged with tons of water, has been fire damaged and possibly already experienced some type of collapse, is now being re-evaluated and entered in an attempt to overhaul and expedite extinguishment. Departments need to have an SOP outlining how a structure is to be handled once the fire is under control yet the building is unsafe for manual overhaul.

It is not uncommon across the country to see firefighters standing on the debris pile caused by a roof collapse or overhauling from the roof down on a structure that was previously deemed vacant and unsafe.

Thanks.