



**Today's discussion is from the
Fireline Safety Category.**

INITIAL ATTACK FIRE SIZEUP/SAFETY

Having a good sizeup is important in order to give both the Incident Commander (IC) and fire management a good idea of what problems exist and what resources may be needed for effective firefighting.

- Use the following reporting factors for size-up and reference local fire size-up cards. Discuss others that may be used.
 - Fire name and location
 - Terrain (slope, aspect, elevation) and position of fire on the slope
 - Size of fire
 - Fuel type, anticipated control problems, and spread potential
 - Values threatened
 - Weather conditions (wind speed and direction)
 - Fire behavior
 - Resources on the fire and those needed
 - Estimated containment and control times
 - Cause (known, suspected, under investigation)

- After your initial size-up of the fire and/or transition from an initial attack IC, answer the following questions. Repeat this analysis whenever there is a change, or predicted change, in conditions on the fire.
 - Have you sized up the fire and relayed the information to dispatch?
 - Is the observed fire weather consistent with the forecast?
 - Can you control the fire with the resources available (on the incident or soon to be on the incident) and under the expected conditions?
 - Have you developed a plan to attack the fire (direct or indirect, anchor points, escape routes, head or flank attack, priority areas); and have you communicated this information to all personnel assigned to the incident, including new arrivals?
 - Are lookouts in place or can you see all of the fire area?
 - Can you communicate with everyone on the fire and with dispatch?
 - Are escape routes and safety zones established? If you are using the black, is it completely burned and without a reburn potential?
 - Are safety and the standard fire orders being followed and/or mitigated?
 - Do you have a complete list of what resources have been ordered for the fire?
 - Will you control the fire before the next operational period; and if you won't, or the size of the organization exceeds the IC's capability to manage, have you informed the agency Fire Management Officer?

References:

[Fireline Handbook](#)
[Incident Response Pocket Guide](#), inside front cover.

Have an idea? Have feedback? Share it.

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