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TOPIC #13 RAT LADDER RAISE

When placing RAT ladders in service remember to consider a few key points.

- The angle of the RAT ladder is considerably different than the angle of other fire ground ladders. Typical fire ground ladders are at approximately 75-degree angle while RAT ladders need to be placed at a 60-degree angle. (Figure 1)
 - There are no rungs extended past the sill. The ladder is set up for rescue. The ladder is placed in the center of the window opening rather than to one side to facilitate removing personnel from the building.
 - The RAT ladders primarily are to be used for the 2nd and 3rd floors. The 35' will not reach past the 3rd floor at a 60-degree angle.
 - RAT ladders should be placed in the windows of every room on the fire floor and the floor above the fire. Realize that ladders do not necessarily need to be placed in each window. The ladders should be placed starting with the area where the fire is located, the floor above the fire and the roof (for truckers operating on the roof) and then moving to the unaffected areas.
 - Members of the RAT team should not use ladders that are already in service on the fire ground but should instead use the ladders still remaining on vehicles at the scene. Ladders should be taken from the vehicles closest to the fire ground first.
- If someone else put up a ladder to use, don't move it.**
- RAT ladders may be used by other companies on the fire ground for purposes other than rescues. (I.e. advancing hose into a window, ventilating upper floor windows etc.)



Figure 1

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- The 24' fiberglass ladder can be easily removed from an apparatus and carried to the point of use by one person. The 28' fiberglass extension ladder is considerably heavier and more awkward than the 24' and it is recommended that at least two people carry it to the point of service. At least three people should carry the 35' to the point of service.
- It is probably easiest to carry the ladder on the shoulders when carried by one person.
- The fly ladder should be up when the ladder is resting on the ground before raising the ladder to the building.
- The butt end of the beams should be resting against the wall prior to raising the ladder.
- **Note:** The ladder should be in such a position that when raised, it will be relatively close to the window frame without breaking the glass. (Figure 2) While placing the ladders in service at the scene, RAT companies should not change the dynamics of the fire or ventilate in any way unless instructed to do so by the IC. Glass is not an impediment to egress and should not be broken while placing ladders in the windows.
- One man can walk either the 24' or the 28' ladder up into the raised or vertical position. At least two people should raise the 35' ladder.
- The firefighter should now be facing the bed section and halyard of the extension ladder. The ladder can then be extended to the proper height by bracing the ladder with your forearm and knee and using the halyard to extend the fly section. (Figure 3)



Figure 2



Figure 3

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- Once the ladder had been extended to the proper height, lift it by bending down and grabbing the appropriate rung and lifting the ladder high enough to avoid interference with your feet while walking the butt of the ladder away from the building. (Figure 4)



Figure 4

- Walk the ladder back until the top of the fly ladder is within a foot of the top of the sill. Remember to look up and guard the top of the ladder while doing so to avoid breaking the glass. (Figure 5)



Figure 5

- Next brace the beam closest to the window with the appropriate foot and grab the opposite beam and roll the ladder on to the windowsill. (Figure 6)

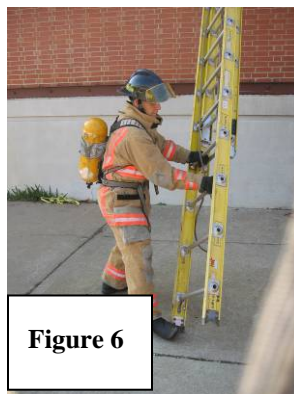



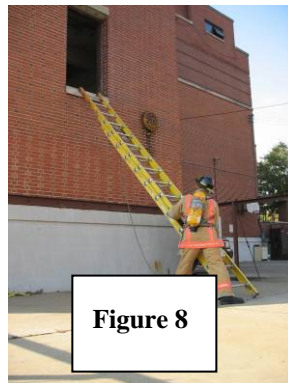
Figure 6


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- The ladder can now be centered in the window taking care not to let the ladder walk away from the building while doing so. (Figure 7)

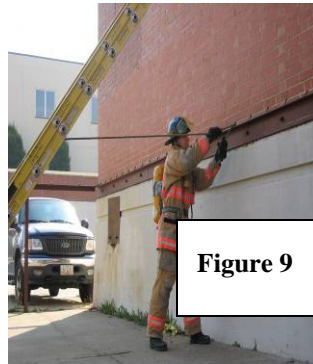


- After the ladder is centered, it can be carefully be positioned so the top of the beams are even with the top of the windowsill. (Figure 8)



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- The halyard can be used to tie off the ladder if possible to prevent its movement after it is set in place. (Figure 9) The poles are not used on the 35' ladder.



- An aggressive heel position should be taken by two fire fighters whenever someone is on the ladder to prevent it from moving away from the building. These members will assist the rescuer with the victim after they reach the ground.