



FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Spring Lake Park/Blaine/
Mounds View (SBM), Minn.

APPLICATION:

TetraKO next generation gel saves a local community church with remarkable defensive attack.

SUMMARY:

While an aerial apparatus is establishing a defensive attack position on this working fire that had already extended through the building's roof, SBM fire fighters applied TetraKO using a single 1 3/4-inch pre-connected attack line from engine 11. Because heavy snow cover limited access to the C/D corner of the fire, firefighters were forced to conduct a defensive attack applying TetraKO near the opposite end of the building with no direct access to the burning area. Due to the steam conversion of the TetraKO, the fire is, nevertheless, extinguished before supply lines are even established or the aerial is able to flow water. The result is that the church building and much of its contents are saved, with minimal water damage and the fire was controlled in 15 minutes.



FIRE INCIDENT REPORT #3:

The call came into our station at approximately 2036 hours on Tuesday, December 28 with the report of a structure fire at a local community church. For a working structure fire, the SBM dispatch and response protocol is an "all call" to our four fire stations.

Upon arrival at the incident, it was apparent that access to the fire side was nearly impossible because of heavy snowfall recently experienced in the Twin Cities that left snow drifts in excess of six feet and plow piles even higher. The duty chief of the day arrived in less than two minutes of the call time, and the fire had already extended through the roof on the C/D corner of church, with heavy smoke conditions on the B/C side.

Command called for a defensive attack due to the fire's fast progression, the inability to establish an immediate water supply, and our knowledge of the wood structure. While the aerial was raised and water lines were being established, Engine 11 (a 1,250 gallons-per-minute pumper containing a solution of water and TetraKO) set up from the threshold of a double door assembly on the B/C side. This was not an ideal position, as there was no access to the fire side because of the significant snowdrifts.

The fire was free burning and no supply lines were laid or established to allow a master stream from the aerial. The only fire attack came from TetraKO and a single 1-3/4 inch pre-connected hose line.

After initially hitting the fire and hot spots with TetraKO, I advised division command to discontinue application and allow TetraKO's steam conversion to occur. Almost immediately, the steam cloud increased, dramatically in size, and remained for an extended period of time. Crews continued to monitor and listen with no further evidence of fire.



Initially, we were resigned to the likelihood of the structure burning to the ground due to the combustible nature of the structure and our inability to make a direct attack on the fire. But, in fact, the 30 plus personnel and ten pieces of apparatus called out to battle the blaze were on the scene for less than three hours due of the performance of TetraKO. In addition, it was 10 degrees outside and there was no ice from run off or from continuous water streams, and the fire investigation was enhanced due to minimal water damage.

The following day, four other chiefs and I – with 112 years of collective experience – conducted an inspection of the site. We were amazed that this building did not go to the ground!

— Nyle Zikmund
SBM Fire Chief Chair,
Fire Operations Advisory Board,
EarthClean Corp.



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EarthClean Corporation
120 Bridgepoint Way, Suite A
South Saint Paul, MN 55075
844-838-7256 • EarthClean.com