Placement, in regards to truck company operations, simply refers to how and where an apparatus is placed at the scene. Virtually all fire incidents require apparatus in some way. The success of most fireground operations depends, whether directly or indirectly, on the effective placement of fire apparatus. An important concept to remember is that there is a direct relationship between apparatus placement and function. Incorrect placement can slow or hinder operations. Truck company placement cannot be addressed specifically without discussing engine company placement, consequently the information in this chapter is also relevant for engine company members, as they should understand how their placement affects the truck company. Ideally, the two operations will be complimentary.
Strategic Priorities

At an emergency, apparatus placement should be made with a specific plan or goal in mind. It cannot be overstated that proper truck company placement during the initial stages of the incident is critical to the overall success of the operation. Truck company functions like forcible entry, ladder placement and ventilation are crucial actions that, if not done correctly, will adversely impact the whole incident.
One of the first consideration of an incident commander should be apparatus placement, specifically truck placement. Managing key positions is a major element in effective apparatus placement. Key positions are those on the fireground that place the apparatus in the best positions to perform their functions.
Key operating positions are usually available only once. If they are not filled initially, they are generally gone for the duration of the incident. Loss of key positions places everyone at a disadvantage. You should begin thinking about apparatus placement well before your reach the scene or even before the alarm is sounded. That is called Pre-Planning.
The Seven P’s
Proper Pre-Planning Prevents a Piss-Poor Performance.

When pre-planning buildings and other target hazards, consider what specific truck company functions might be required. Ideal placement might be different for roof access versus water tower operations.
Truck companies are the largest apparatus on the fireground. If your truck is the first company on scene, don’t limit engine company tactics by parking directly in front of the incident unless the aerial ladder is needed there. Parking directly in front of an incident will commit your truck to that spot for the duration. Of course engines need to leave room for the truck, however, trucks need to leave room for the engines.
Water Tower Operations

When a water tower operation is obviously needed, the corner of the building is usually the best location for the truck. Operating a ladder pipe from the corner gives the operator the ability to cover the largest area with the least amount of ladder movement. Also, a building's corners are structurally stronger than its sides, reducing the probability of wall collapse. Another consideration is that the corner of buildings usually don’t contain windows, which means a minimum of smoke and fire will impact the ladder and its operator.
Tight and narrow street are a common problem for truck companies. All personnel on the apparatus should be looking out to assist the Engineer and Tillerman.
The tillerman has a great vantage point by being seated up high in the vehicle. The tillerman can see much farther ahead over the vehicles to the front, and a completely unobstructed view to the rear.
Room must be left for deployment of outriggers and wheel chocks.
When determining apparatus placement, make sure you look up! The ladder must be clear or able to maneuver around overhead wires and large trees.
For roof access, ensure your trolley (if equipped) is pinned to the base section of the aerial.
You may be required to raise, rotate and extend the aerial between two objects.
A tag line helps for spotting roof tops and walls to keep your aerial unsupported.
Spotting on Larger Streets

On larger streets, placement in the center can allow for aerial ladder placement over engines and better climbing angles, (depending on building height). This may also allow for more area to place ground ladders.
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- Tactical Considerations
  - The residential structure fire is perhaps the most common type of incident where truck company functions are needed. With this in mind, when possible, it is best to drive past the incident which gives the company officer a 3-sided look at the structure and gives the fireman a look at the bldg to determine ladder size and placement. This will also allow for the engine company to spot in front of the structure allowing ease in stretching their lines.
On truck companies, ground ladders are removed from the rear of the apparatus. By spotting past the incident, the ground ladders are already facing toward the scene. Spotting short of or in front of the incident usually requires awkward and unsafe ladder removal.
Poor truck company placement at residential fires is usually the result of improper engine company placement. If the engine company spots in the middle of the street instead of to the side, the truck company is unable to drive past. Squads and BC vehicles must also be cognizant of this problem and try to park on the opposite side of the street and in driveways. Nothing is more frustrating for a truck company than to find it's ideal operating spot occupied by a parked squad that is not being used.
Room For Ladder Access

The tillerman should routinely (when applicable) kick the trailer out to one side to allow for ladder removal from the rear ladder compartment. This allows for engines to get in tighter to the incident and compensates for the deficiencies of other apparatus drivers.
When using the aerial for roof access, consider placing the ladder at an angle to the roof line for easier access on and off the roof. It allows for more of a footprint on the parapit for crews to access the roof.
The picture on left shows the aerial at an angle to the roofs edge and allows the fireman an easier step off the ladder with a lower angle and larger footprint than the fireman on the right.
At a vehicle accident, especially one involving entrapment, it is a good idea to park behind the incident to shield the crew from other vehicle traffic. Also, sometimes you can get close enough for the hoses to reach from the power unit without removing it from the truck.
SUMMARY

Truck company operations do not take place in a vacuum. Usually, once an apparatus has spotted, it is committed to that location. Therefore, initial consideration should be given to possible future operations such as water tower. Engine companies must also be aware of the truck company’s needs, such as maneuvering room to remove ladders, etc.
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SAVE ROOM FOR THE TRUCK!
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Break Time