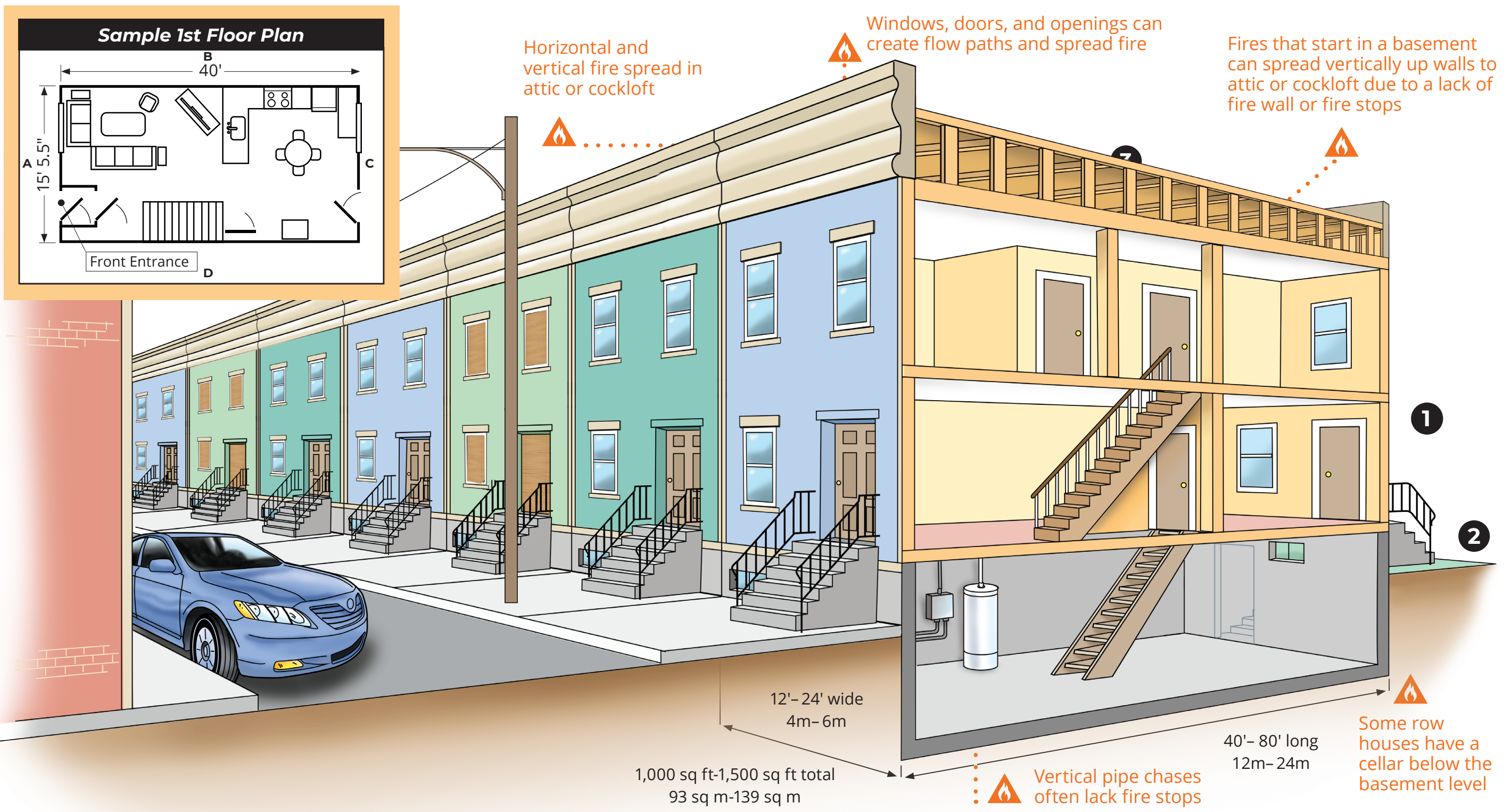




# ROW HOUSE FIREFIGHTING TACTICS



## FIREFIGHTERS STAY SAFE FOLLOW THESE 6 TACTICS

- 1** If interior unit, size-up Sides A and C; locate fire and extent; send resources to Side C
- 2** Hoseline deployment:
  - A.** Fight fire on the level of the fire (exterior attack may be most effective initially)
  - B.** Protect search
  - C.** Basement window or door
  - D.** Side C through alley or adjoining house
  - E.** Backup hoseline ready
  - F.** Use cellar nozzle to get water into below grade areas
  - G.** Use piercing or cockloft nozzle to get water into void spaces
- 3** Coordinate ventilation with fire attack
- 4** Send resources inside to Exposure B and D
- 5** Send resources and charged hoseline to attic or cockloft to check for extension
- 6** Position ground ladders to all upper floor windows; use caution around utility wires

Note: Numbered tactics are not prioritized.

## TYPICAL FEATURES

### EXTERIOR ROW HOUSE

- NARROW WINDOWS**
- FRONT STOOP (STEPS)** leads to street
- 2ND & 3RD FLOOR 'BAY'** 3 or more windows that extend from the structure
- ORNATE CORNICES**
- SINGLE SLOPING ROOF** modest ornate wood or brick cornice

### INTERIOR ROW HOUSE

- SINGLE RUN, STEEP STAIRS**
- LONG, NARROW HALLWAYS**
- WALKOUT BASEMENT**
- BASEMENT and/or CELLAR** used for storage
- CELLAR** only accessible from the basement

### CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS

- BALLOON** frame construction
- BUILDING PERIOD** late 1800s to early 1900s
- BRICK EXTERIOR WALLS**
- SOLID WOOD BEAM** floor joists and roof rafters
- PLASTER and LATH** over wood framing
- TYPE III CONSTRUCTION**



Conduct a community risk assessment to understand unique features of row houses in your jurisdiction. Row house modernization efforts may mean the exterior is refaced and interior has a different floor plan. Materials used for modernization or new row house construction may burn more quickly.



*"Don't underestimate the danger to firefighters when fighting a row house fire. Access to the rear of the property is a major challenge. Basement and cellar fires in row houses have resulted in many line of duty deaths. You must be diligent and prepare as though you're going to a fire each time you report for duty."*

**Assistant Chief Harry Bannan**  
Philadelphia Fire Department, Platoon D



*"Basic skills – quick, proficient hoseline deployment and advancement – aggressive searches. Firefighters must perform these skills effectively when fighting row home fires."*

**Firefighter Vincent DeNiso**  
Wilmington, DE Fire Department, Squad 4

## MORE INFORMATION [cdc.gov/niosh/fire/](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/)

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UL Basement Fire Video

