

Thermal imaging camera increases site in fire

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A call comes into the 9-1-1 Communications Center because a fire has broken out in a local home. Fire Department personnel are dispatched, and, as they are responding to the call, a large pillar of smoke can be seen.

As they arrive on the scene, a 9-1-1 dispatcher advises firefighters that a child is inside the home. What is their first move?

Several months ago, Winter Park firefighters would have had to search

for a missing individual by crawling through smoke that can prohibit firefighters from seeing one inch in front of their masks.

This search and rescue method has unfortunately resulted in many instances where children have died after firefighters have passed over them because of noise and smoke.

Using technology which was developed for the military, the Fire Department has now upgraded its

search and rescue techniques with its purchase of a thermal-imaging camera.

The camera allows firefighters to see through smoke and locate and rescue victims while looking behind walls to ensure the fire is completely out. It also allows firefighters to attack the fire's source and thus reduce property damage, save lives and greatly reduce firefighter's exposure to hazards.