

Dallas Begg
Firefighter/EMT
Osceola County
Fire Rescue
MSC 123



By July 30, 2002, Firefighter/EMT Dallas Begg had been with Osceola Fire Rescue for only eight days. Now the 20-year-old Academy graduate was waiting with his teammate, Lt. John Mickel, to take part in a live-fire search and rescue exercise in a vacant, three-bedroom, concrete-block house.

Inside, instructors had set fire to some bales of hay and wooden pallets stacked in the closet of a back bedroom. Once smoke from the fire spread throughout the house, the waiting firefighters were ordered in to search for a dummy that served in the role of a fire victim.

When the search team did not emerge within a reasonable time, and could not be reached by radio, rescuers went in to find them. The rookie Begg and the veteran fire officer Mickel were found badly burned and unresponsive in a back bedroom, their protective gear mostly burned away.

Investigators later concluded that the two firefighters had been victims of a flashover. (A flashover occurs when temperatures in a room become so hot that everything in the room bursts into flame.) As a result of this tragic training accident and the follow-up investigation, new laws have been passed for conducting live-fire exercises in a safer manner.

