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Snapshot Size-Up #139

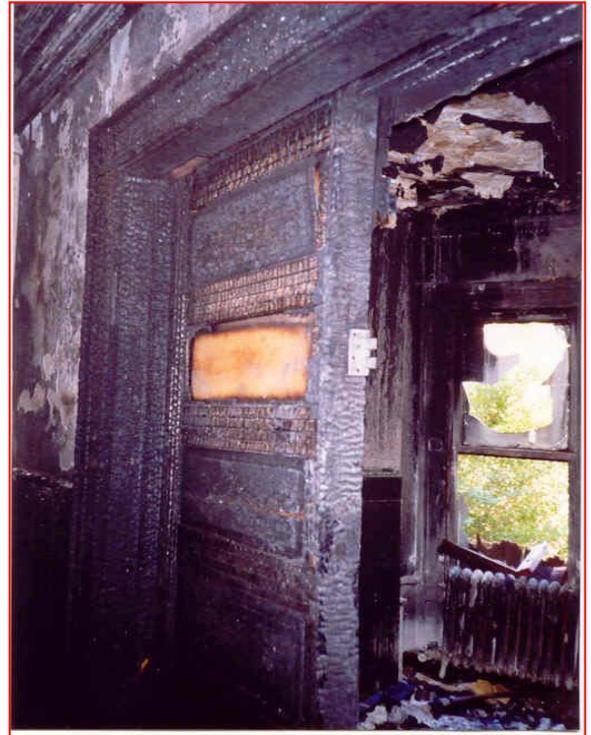
Sliding Pocket Doors

Sliding pocket doors were designed and installed into an apartment or home to give privacy between rooms. The doors are often large in size and designed to be pulled from opposite sides of the wall opening. The interior wall that houses the pocket or opening is a wider framed wall than the other walls within the building that was specifically framed to allow the entire sliding door to disappear within. As firefighters, two immediate concerns must come to mind:

FIRST, if the doors are still in use today, the fire has early and easy access into the sliding doors opening or pocket.

SECOND is the width of the pocket door wall. This is a much wider wall that is not only designed to house a sliding pocket door, but is also a large opening into the buildings structure. This opening could easily allow fire to gain access to the building's void spaces.

Because of their aesthetic value, many pocket doors are still in use today. They can be found in older as well as newer designed wood/frame and brick, private and multiple dwellings. For those pocket doors that are no longer in use, you have to expect that they may have had their openings trimmed over. This may delay fire from extending in and behind the walls, but again, if fire compromises the wooden trim, fire can extend to the buildings void spaces. Be prepared and take an extra look next time you are working in one of these type buildings. They can present significant challenges.



Deputy Chief Mike Terpak (Jersey City Fire Department) is the founder of Promotional Prep, a NJ based consulting firm designed to prepare firefighters and officers as they study for promotional exams. He is also the author of *Fireground Size-Up, & Assessment Center Strategy and Tactics*, and co-author of *Fireground Operational Guides*. Visit www.FireOpsOnline.com for more articles and tips from Chief Terpak.

