

# Steel

## Fire Training Towers



## Have Taken Over The Market

The first fire training structures were designed and constructed with concrete. At that time, concrete was the best material available to sustain repeated live fires, but it had its shortfalls. Each structure had to be designed by an architect or engineer whom typically had little experience, if any, with the unique needs of the fire training industry. As a result, the department received a tower that did not meet all of their training needs. In addition, each tower was designed on an as-needed basis. Therefore, there wasn't an opportunity to improve on previous designs. This limited the development and improvement of future fire training towers.

As the need for training structures increased, departments sought out a viable alternative to the conventionally designed concrete building. Pre-engineered steel was brought to the market by integrating commercial/agricultural building designs with fire training tower designs.

Steel proved to have many benefits, including economies of scale and design flexibility. Since steel is less expensive to construct, fire departments save money. In conjunction, design flexibility is an inherent benefit of steel; it allows towers to be easily configured to meet the department's needs.

### Enter Fire Facilities Inc.

In 1989, Fire Facilities entered the market by offering a steel fire train-

ing tower specifically designed for fire training. We identified the need for a building system that was designed specifically for fire training without the trappings of accommodating an existing system. We started with a clean slate and the attitude that every component and feature incorporated in the final system would be designed to provide realism and safety.

A structural steel skeleton was chosen to provide unlimited design flexibility and strength capable of obtaining any heights, widths, and spans. This allowed us to offer the ultimate training structure as well as the smallest practical structure efficiently.

We felt the exterior wall system needed to be flat to provide realistic and safe laddering and rappelling scenarios, as well as durable enough to with-



stand the loads and wear from actively training departments. A steel stud curtain wall system was selected for support, but no commercially available wall panel existed that provided both durability and a flat surface. So we designed our own. Although our

in-house manufactured wall system may resemble common house siding, it is actually made from galvanized steel that is more than twice as thick as commercially available wall panels.

Roof panels received the same design considerations. We designed a flat deck that could be manufactured as either a flat roof or a pitched



roof at virtually any angle and still provide the durability and loading characteristics needed to withstand training activities.

Once the system parameters were developed, we created an endless list of features and options that could be included. Options such as elevator shafts, helicopter props, movable partitions, and balconies of all kinds were soon made available. Now virtually any feature can be included into the designs to make Fire Facilities' towers uniquely capable for any type of training requirements.

Steel fire training towers are the ideal structure for any department's training needs. Steel provides unlimited design flexibility, reduced construction costs, and proper design attributes for a multitude of training scenarios. ■

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