The primary consideration of any operation is to assure firefighter and public safety. It is a must to assess potential fire behavior, ingress/egress routes, nature of the threat, hazardous materials, and available water supplies before engaging in the protection of any structure.

Factors that may make an attempt to save a structure hopeless or too dangerous include:

- The fire is making a sustained run and there is little or no clearance between the structure and the fuel.
- The fire behavior is extreme; spot fires are numerous and the spread is outpacing containment.
- Water supply will not last as long as the threat of the fire.
- The fire intensity dictates that you leave the fire area immediately.
- The structure is constructed of wood and has a wood, shake roof.
- The roof of the structure is more than one-quarter involved.
- There is fire inside of the structure or windows are broken and there is no way to quickly repair them.
- You cannot safely remain at the structure because your escape route could become unusable.

When implementing a plan to protect structures, consider the following:

- Do not enter a burning structure unless you are trained, equipped, and authorized. Firefighter safety and survival is the number one priority.
- Always stay mobile and wear all of your PPE.
- Back in equipment to allow for a quick escape.
- Coil a short, charged line with fog nozzle on your engine for safety and quick knock down capability.
- Don’t make long hose lays. Keep at least 100 gallons of water reserve in your tank.
- Check the road system before the fire approaches. Know bridge limits, alternate access routes, and turnarounds for your vehicle and other support vehicles.
- Determine if residents are home. Leave on the inside and outside lights, regardless of the time of day. Close the garage door.
- Place the owners’ ladder at a corner of the home on the side with the least fire threat.
- Coil and charge garden hoses.
- Check and mark hazmat; e.g., LPG, pesticides, and paint storage.

References:
Incident Response Pocket Guide