



In response to your questions:

**“Why is a Structural Survey Worth the Money?”**

1. It may prevent serious injury and/or death by identifying compromised structural integrity of your training prop.
2. It may identify structural degradation that could be corrected before it progresses to an “unsalvageable” condition.
3. It will include a detailed report outlining:
  - a. The use of the structure
  - b. The projected life of the structure at the current frequency of use
  - c. The projected life of the structure with projected increases in frequency of use in the foreseeable future.
  - d. The current condition of the structure relative to the original design intent
  - e. Recommendations for repairs that are required to restore the structure to the original design capacities to the extent possible.
  - f. Engineering and construction cost estimates to make repairs.
  - g. Engineering and construction cost estimates to make improvements.
4. This report will provide the foundation for the department’s request for the funding required to meet the departments training objectives.

Why is it worth it to hire an Engineer with extraordinary experience with fire training structures as opposed to working with a local firm that may be more familiar with your particular department? (E.g. The firm that designs your local fire stations)

1. A specialist provides design services all over the country, thereby gaining a unique insight as a result of its exposure to the extraordinary breadth of imagination and experience existing in the fire service training community as a whole.
2. Firms specializing in schools, or fire stations or hospitals maintain databases of information, specifications and details that relate solely to their particular specialty. It takes many years to develop the bank of information that enables the firm to competitively offer the particular expertise required for the specific classification of use. This is especially true as it pertains to live fire training structures and of exceptional importance as this specialty is rarely found.
3. Design fees for all types of structures normally range from 7 to 10% of the total construction cost. Remember that this relatively insignificant fraction of your total cost will control how effectively you spend the rest of your money. In other words, \$50,000 spent in design fees will have a tremendous and irreversible impact upon the end product that you obtain with the next \$500,000 of expenditures. If the first \$50,000 is properly spent, your chances of being satisfied with your end product are greatly improved. If not, regardless of the quality of the contractor, you will be unhappy with the end product.
4. An experienced designer will know what pitfalls to avoid. He will not only assist you in making your own decisions but he will prove to offer invaluable advise and leadership to the design and construction team as they endeavor to deliver an end product that meets all of your budgetary, operational, and training objectives.

Thanks for asking.  
Bill Glover