

## Two Alarms on Royal Anne Lane

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Two alarms were struck today (only the second for the year?) at 725 Royal Anne Lane, at an apartment fire in north Raleigh. The fire department was dispatched at 2:18 p.m. Ladder 1 was first on scene, with heavy smoke and fire showing from the roof and third floor of a three-story, twelve-unit, wood-frame apartment building with 12,924 square-feet. Built 1994. They also had their own hydrant, in front of the structure. Rescue 1, Squad 15 (which laid in wet), and Engine 4 were next arriving.

Crews entered with a line and began searches as Ladder 1 and second due Ladder 3 prepared for aerial operations. (Building evacuation was already underway with maintenance alerting residents.) After about nine minutes, the last crews had exited the building and aerial operations started. (About 2:30 p.m.) One portable monitor and two hand lines were also used outside. A natural gas line was also burning on the side of the structure.

The Division Chief (Car 20) arrived and assumed command. He requested a second alarm, which was dispatched about 2:44 p.m. Staging was located on Six Forks Road. The majority of the fire was knocked down within, say, twenty minutes of aerial operations. The fire was contained to second and third floors, and with much of the roof burned off.

Extended extinguishment ensued, as well as the remaining primary searches. Due to the volume of water, the structure was deemed unsafe, and entry was minimized. Dispatched at 2:18 p.m. Controlled at 3:23 p.m. Raleigh police, Wake County Fire Services, and ATF assisted with investigation.

Cause was determined as accidental due to improperly smoking materials. Watch your butts! All twelve apartments were rendered uninhabitable. Twenty-four people were displaced plus numerous pets. Two dogs and one cat were resuscitated by Wake EMS.

First alarm: E4, Sq15, E9, E16, L1, L3, R1, B5, B1, A1, C20, C420, C401; Second alarm: E18, E19, E17, L2, L5, B3; Plus C14 (Safety Officer), C5; Medical EMS 3, EMS 5, EMS 6, EMS 11, EMS 38, M95, D4, T1. Coverage included E26 to Sta 18, L7 to Sta 16, E13 to Sta 15. Companies to remain on scene until 0800 hours the following morning, with relief companies rotated through the night

Alas, Legeros couldn't get there until after work. [See his aftermath photos.](#) Here are media links: [WNCN](#), [WRAL](#), [WTVD](#), [News & Observer](#).



How common is it to see the ATF on fire scenes?

**egg1** - 11/11/14 - 02:06

Trying to understand how fires are labeled "accidental" when a lit cigarette was intentionally thrown on the ground into pine straw. Doesn't necessarily apply in this situation as I believe it started on the balcony. Even so, the smoker could/should be charged with negligence. No problem with smokers as it does not bother me and I'm not one to tell another how they should live their life until their choices affect my own. Throwing a cigarette down is littering. Throwing a lit cigarette down should be labeled attempted arson. Charging a smoker with attempted arson for discarding a lit cigarette is no different than charging a driver with "C&R" because they were texting while driving which caused them to crash into someone else.

Fact is a lot of people lost their home because someone was too lazy to snub out their cigarette and throw it into the trash. Fortunately no lives were lost. But what if a life was lost? What if it was your loved one? Would you want the smoker charged with manslaughter or even worse murder?

**Rescue Ranger** - 11/11/14 - 11:42

I see your point RR. Nothing more pisses me off than some douchebag who throws a cigarette down or "improperly disposes of their smoking material" and it burns out 20 innocent families who were just trying to make a living. But, charging them with attempted arson is a little bit of a stretch, because was the INTENT to burn down the complex? Probably not, BUT, I think there should be harsh penalties in place to try to curb this careless behavior.

Very sad to see this as a trend....

**Silver** - 11/11/14 - 13:19

ATF serves as a resource for the state/county/locals to use. I'm sure they all work together on fire scenes regularly. First, it keeps the skills sharp, and second, it gives you another set of eyes and ears on scene to help conduct the cause and origin. Great to see all levels represented and working together (typically there's an SBI agent in the mix too).

**Silver** - 11/11/14 - 13:24

A driver texting while driving did not have the INTENT to crash into someone but they did due to the distraction and can/will get charged with careless & reckless driving or manslaughter if a death occurs. Same goes for a drunk driver. Fact is littering is illegal and throwing a cigarette butt on the ground or out the window of a car is littering so why should they not be charged? Why is throwing cigarette butts down accepted? Again, why is it labeled "accidental" when the smoker did not accidentally discard the cigarette illegally?

**Rescue Ranger** - 11/11/14 - 17:55

Betcha the American fire service would be the perfect powerhouse to affect such a cultural change in this country. But it might be at a cost of job security. (Technology is going to catch up anyway. Better building materials. More sophisticated detection systems. Stoves that turn off before they reach the temperature of ignition. Etc. The number of fires will go further down, at some point, and some future decade. )

Makes me think of recent research that I have been doing in the 1940s and 50s and 60s. Mattress fire after mattress fire. Smoking in bed. Closet fire caused by cigarette. Whole class of calls now no longer common. But that's a good thing, right?

**Legeros** - 11/11/14 - 18:13

I don't think there is any risk to job security. Stupidity, bad luck, ignorance, malice, and any number of other reasons still exist to visit tragedy on people on any given day. unless we build only fireproof structures, there will still be fires. Sure, maybe the frequency will change.... Remember we are supposed to be living in a paperless society now, where computers make our lives easier... So much for grandiose visions of the future...

**Bob** - 11/16/14 - 23:13

@RR, you make a good point. However in the context of starting a fire with a cigarette, it is considered two separate acts. The person may have intentionally thrown the cigarette butt, but accidentally started the fire. An intentional fire is only when someone deliberately starts a fire, then the charge of arson is assessed in various degrees. In the smokers case, he/she intentionally littered, but accidentally started the fire. You have to remember what you can prove in a court of law, and the two acts cannot be combined beyond a reasonable doubt.

**Jonny** - 11/18/14 - 08:18

@Jonny – Yeah, I understand what you are saying but my point is the law needs to be changed. If you compare the same logic as you posted

a drunk driver shouldn't be charged with manslaughter if the resulting crash causes a death since the drunk driver didn't intend to kill anyone.

**Rescue Ranger** - 11/18/14 - 09:20

It all comes down to the intent, as stated earlier. Maybe some sort of "involuntary arson" or something like that would be a welcomed statute to hold those who make poor decisions involving fire accountable.

**Silver** - 11/18/14 - 23:33

A perfect example of irony. Squad program has proven to reduce multi-alarm fires in Raleigh especially at apartment fires, the proof is in the numbers. And one of the first fires after the dispatch changes occur goes to a second alarm. The Squad may have been coming from a little ways away but it was nice having a fresh crew pulling up to help finish the job. PUT THE SQUAD BACK ON FIRE DUTY AS A SQUAD. There are other ways to fix the problem instead of reducing a service to the citizens. #InSquadWeTrust

**Irony** - 11/23/14 - 13:15

@Irony – The squad program was tried for a year and reevaluated. Sorry to burst your bubble but the squad program has failed. This fire is a prime example of why the squads were reduced from responding to fire calls. If S-14 was on the original dispatch there would not have been a single "rescue" asset available in the city as S-15, R-1, & L-3 were on scene. In fact, R-1 was 2nd on the scene. By your statement R-1 was not adequate in their duty since an additional squad would have prevented this fire from going to 2-alarm. Also, not sure how adding another ceiling pulling crew was going to prevent this fire from going to 2-alarms and why the ceiling pulling crew needs to be a squad company.

**Rescue Ranger** - 11/23/14 - 17:51

The original intent of squads on fire dispatches was a failure hence the removal. Nothing more was accomplished by a squad that an engine company couldn't perform. There has been no special training for a squad company for a working fire. In fact, the requirements to ride a squad and even the rescue has been removed as lately I have had firefighters who have been online for only a year riding rescue.

Nothing set in stone right now but it appears the next engine ordered will be a "toned down" version of the current squad meaning it will have the coffin-covered hose bed, a combi-tool on the front bumper, integrated hydro pump with lines, and a small assortment of extrication tools. The idea is the stations which serve the beltline will get a new "squad version" pumper so any minor extrication will be performed by an engine rather than tying up a ladder. This is one of the main reason S-15 will go to #7 so there will be a squad on opposing sides of the beltline for now until 2 more can be ordered allowing "4 corners".

**Rescue Ranger** - 11/24/14 - 12:36

The squad concept didn't fail.. It was wanted by some not to succeed. I believe we were an invaluable asset to scene commanders. But evidently I'm wrong but what do I know I only rode it for 2 years

**Brandon** - 11/24/14 - 16:57

I think the future outlook of having 4 squads will shine much brighter than the previous generation of only having 2.

**Rescue Ranger** - 11/24/14 - 19:03

I believe the only difference in the new engine will be a slightly lower hose bed with more dividers than we usually order and having the ground ladders mounted on the officer side instead of in a rear compartment.....other than that, pretty much the same old engine we've been getting.

**maybe not...** - 11/25/14 - 11:57

Just to throw in a little more thought for you on the squad concept- it was a poorly implemented program to begin with. Even so we were a valuable asset-be it fresh bodies or whatever – on the fireground. However-we are a stopgap measure at best. To echo Brandon somewhat-our run numbers are too high and there needed to be more demand for rescue to justify a second unit (rescue) later. The squads were on their way out before they really got going. We are merely an extended capability engine that is assigned to SOC and USAR. Fair- maybe not. But obvious to those of us riding we are not a priority in any way. A good example is the manning- there is a demonstrated unwillingness to commit to maintaining manpower with trained, experienced personnel. Our typical backfill to ensure at least 3 and sometimes 4 is usually a new boy from the last couple of academies. Lot of help if needed on a technical rescue scene or multi-alarm fire. Just a few observations/thoughts to add to the discussion.

**Goose** - 11/25/14 - 19:20

Mike – I have heard similar descriptions but in reality not much has come of it. (My perception) Our fireground jobs – prior to recent redirect – were essentially the same as the Rescue and/or Ladder. We were additional manpower. As far as rescue capabilities – not exactly an "ace" but reasonably close. There isn't enough buy in or support in manning or requirements for manning for it to be as fully effective as it could be. See my earlier comment for examples. And to answer the question – I don't think we do. Raleigh doesn't have the same demographics, inner city,

etc. of the larger cities that attempt to use the squad concept – as I understand its use in the larger, Northern cities. We are a widely spread out metropolitan area, with different requirements. One such example would be the original conception of the third rescue truck. It was never based on call volume – it was more on geographical area-which was rapidly expanding, and the length/time of emergency runs across this large area. While call volume is sometimes a concern – it isn't primary- a rapid, effective response to the emergency needs of the citizens is.

**Goose** - 11/27/14 - 09:55

@Mike – I think the “bad mojo” has already developed. I hear it on both ends being on the rescue and working on an opposite shift on an engine company. Some if not most members of the SOC team feel like the specialized training has put them on a pedestal above the rest. Naturally, a sense of entitlement even if it's in the form of recognition develops. The members either not yet on or no desire to be on the SOC team laughs and makes fun of that sense of entitlement. Fact is whether on the SOC team or not one transfer list can put them at the slowest station running 1 call a day and might see 1 fire a year.

**Rescue Ranger** - 11/28/14 - 23:07

this is about as funny a thread as I've seen

**Brandon** - 12/02/14 - 21:08

Glad that we can amuse, Brandon. Feel free to take us into the realm of serious, what are your perceptions on the successes and or challenges of the squad program?

**Legeros** - 12/02/14 - 22:19

Yeah, really. Not trying to offend anyone, Capt., but that is the talk I hear. Obviously not everyone or anyone for that matter on the SOC team acts that way intentionally but that IS the perception.

**Rescue Ranger** - 12/03/14 - 17:06

Interesting conversation, we are looking at a “squad” type company to help the truck company with extrication and to carry additional rescue equipment(we don't have a heavy rescue). We recently staffed the truck full time and the same “perception” is coming about. There are also some guys who need to check their attitude as well. I thought it was just a small department issue with hurt feelings because they weren't assigned to the truck.

**GA Firefighter** - 12/03/14 - 20:22

I tried to bring us into the realm of seriousness but I guess I was too offensive and my post were rejected. Over-moderation sure can derail a conversation.

**wheeler** - 12/03/14 - 23:03

While there are a few who have put themselves on a pedestal, I don't believe its the majority. I agree that the squad companies should be made up of senior people with the extra mile attitude. Where I see the problem is that admin. wants to look at the department as interchangeable parts. While this looks great on paper and when trying to do transfers and such I do feel its a different story for us on the fire ground. The fix would be to get out front on manpower issues but that is a money issue that just seems to never catch up. I am a proponent of this: if you are a strong ladder person then that is where you should be, same with an Engine, Squad etc. I feel that this provides our city with the best service, but those decisions are above my pay grade so I will continue to do my best (I know it's not much) with what I am given or where I am sent. @Irony, the addition to the squad has not reduced the number multi-alarm fires in the city of Raleigh. I was pretty amused with that comment. The sheer number of people that we get on 1 alarm now matches what would be a 3 alarm fire when I started with the department.

**gen3fire** - 12/04/14 - 22:06

I don't and haven't put myself or crew on a pedestal. When you do that you set up for failure. I agree with Wheeler, the majority of soc personnel are people who are driven and highly adaptable. Which is the idea behind a squad company- an audible which can be called and used in any circumstance.

I do wish that before people state the squad concept failed or won't work, talk with people across the 3 platoons and ask questions. Work constructively to figure out what could be done to improve the program. Everyone has something to offer.

I still have difficulty trying to figure out where this program has failed... Did someone get overlooked in a fire, did a tow truck haul a body to the impound that couldn't be extricated? Was a technical rescue call not answered??? Or, is the more likely answer this – they've changed run cards which must mean it failed. How did each of you reading this view the squad idea 2 years ago? Did you actually think 2 people on a truck was effective? The majority of my career has been at a station with an engine and rescue and I can assure you that I didn't think we were very effective with 2 people.

When we, as a department, can look in the mirror and say "what will make us better and am I brave enough to do it?" We will have accomplished something.

**Brandon** - 12/05/14 - 13:02

And I have to ask this question to Rescue Ranger.... What specialized training does one receive to ride a ladder or an engine? None that I know of. So why are you knocking the abilities of what we do?

**Brandon** - 12/05/14 - 21:16

"There has been no special training for a squad company for a working fire".

Copy and pasted from above Mike :)

I may have took it the wrong way, but saw it as a jab to prove failure. If I took it wrong RR or Mike, I apologize. I do know that we've spent countless hours over the past 2 years training here at 15 on our own to become as proficient as possible at all of our disciplines.

**Brandon** - 12/06/14 - 18:10

I would love to put in my \$.02 also, but first "rescue ranger" why don't you let us know who you are? I would like to know where your viewpoint is coming from so that I can reply appropriately.

**Burns** - 12/06/14 - 18:15

Those I want knowing already know. I have reasons for not using my real name as do other "anonymous" users. If I used my real name some of you posting right now would understand why I choose to stay anonymous. You don't have to drink the Kool-aid but sometimes it does need to be stirred to stay sweet.

Mike, it's your site. If you don't like "anonymous" users put a ban in place. My assumption is you choose not to implement such a ban because the replies would be very single-sided and soon there after those posters would fade away making this no different than a twitter account.

**Rescue Ranger** - 12/07/14 - 19:24

Thank God, that someone brings the Air Truck. Nobody can fight any fire without breathing air. God Bless the Air Man!!!!!!!

**SCBA Supporter** - 12/09/14 - 12:28

Name: (real name preferred)

E-mail: (optional)

Web Site: (optional)

Remember personal info?

Yes

No

Comment:

/ [Textile](#)

Comment moderation is enabled on this site. This means that your comment will not be visible on this site until it has been approved by an editor.

To prevent spam we require you to answer this silly question

**What are the FIRST TWO LETTERS of the word 'fire'?**

[\(Register your username / Log in\)](#)

Notify: Yes, send me email when someone replies.