

**How Many Comm Centers?**

03/12/06 60 W - + 15 - 13

How many different communications centers dispatch fire and EMS departments in Wake County? .

Raleigh / Wake ECC - Dispatches RFD, most Wake FDs, most Wake EMS agencies.

Apex - Dispatches AFD and AEMS exclusively.

Cary - Dispatches CFD and CEMS exclusively.

Holly Springs - Dispatches HS fire and EMS units.

RDU - Dispatches CFR exclusively.

Any others?

---

Unfortunately, many departments still rely on 1. The Wake County Communications Center is in downtown Raleigh and are dealt with the busy task of dispatching Raleigh Police and Fire, Wake County EMS, and numerous other Police and Fire agencies throughout the county. In my eyes, it would be a beautiful thing if Raleigh FD and PD could break away and have their own. The call volumes in the city alone justify it.

**Guest** - 03/12/06 - 23:56

I think raleigh pd & Fire should have there own comm center. Many small towns have there own comm system. Like apex,Holly Springs,Graham Nc,Burlington. All of these departments are half the size.

**Chris King** ([Email](#)) - 03/13/06 - 22:30

i'm the opposite, especially with the new addition of the word "patch" to our dictionary, it is udderly stupid to me that they patch a wake county tac channel to a mutual aid channel? I mean what is the point of having 15 channels in every radio in wake and durham county if you aren't going to use them? the patch is supposed to be seamless but the quality of the radio transmission and the delay are awful. for pete's sake, if cary EMS is coming with a local county FD put them on the same channel, which in this case should be mutual aid 1-5. not having cary EMS on mutual aid 11 and say morrisville fd on tac 14 with a patch? what did our multi-million dollar radio system accomplish? not a dang thing the way we are using it now. It is my opinion that this patch is going to result in somebody missing information due to the delay and decreased sound quality.

I'm of the opinion that we need to have a county wide dispatch center that handles everybody in the county, PD, SO, EMS, FD's, etc... have staffing at a level that it should be where you can have people dedicated to specific areas, but that are on the same system in the same room doing the same job. Has anybody really listened to Tri-Com while raleigh/cary/apex try to find an ambulance that's available for a call? It's a joke. Not to mention if raleigh gets a call and dispatches fire/first responders and it's another 3 or 4 minutes before EMS is dispatched from apex or cary. or vice versa cary gets the call and dispatches EMS and then has to call raleigh for "first responders" There needs to be either one central dispatch or at the very least have everybody on the same system so that they know what's going on.

Long winded, but just an observation on listening to Tri-Com and dealing with these Raleigh/Apex/Cary calls here recently... kind of like both Cary FD and Apex FD getting dispatched a structure fire on E. Chatham St yesterday... if there is one call center alot of confusion could have been avoided!... just my \$.02 to a highly debated topic, and not a slam on any one comm. center, but the way the system as a whole is working right now.

**CFP 7021** ([Email](#)) - 03/13/06 - 23:29

Having multiple dispatch points harkens me back to the bad old days in Johnston County with dispatch points in Benson, Clayton, Selma, and Smithfield (there were actually two in Smithfield- fire and police were seperate), along with the Sheriff's Department. Now it is all in one place, except for Selma PD, which is coming soon. In Wake County, it causes confusion when different dispatch points are talking with their own units. Case in point, when I worked at EMS 6 last year, the call came into Cary 911, with EMS relayed to Wake County. The call was actually inside Cary , but it was 8 miles from CFD #1 (who responded) but less and 1 mile from RFD 24. One dispatch center would ensure that the closest resource is disatched to each call. It would also make MCI incidents go better, as well as multiple alarm fire calls. Just my \$0.04 owrth.

**Dale Johnson** ([Email](#)) - 03/14/06 - 00:43

One dispatch center would ensure that the closest resource is dispatched to each call.

That'll be the day!! one can only dream, it's closer now than it ever was, but still a far far ways away...

**CFP 7021** ([Email](#)) - 03/14/06 - 01:01

I'll add my pennies to the debate, but we should not only have a consolidated dispatch center (just one for the whole county!), we should also have a comprehensive numbering system for the whole county too. Don't get me started.....

I've heard rumor that Cary (which went 800 years ago when nobody else could talk with them), is considering a radio system that will be different from Viper. Shevias is exactly correct: a ton of money has been spent, but full interoperability has not been accomplished.

When FireNews did our interoperability study around the state a few months ago, I was suprised at how many smaller NC counties did report that they had interoperability (as well as a comprehensive numbering scheme).

That's great for them, but what about us here in the Capital county where departments are really running their tails off?

**harkey** ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 03/14/06 - 04:29

I will add this to the "closest unit dispatch" method, atleast for the RFD. It's a joke!! I can speak on this because it is something we deal with on a regular basis at Station 20. Streets like "Orchard Hollow" and "Broad Oaks" are clearly closer to RFD #20. However, the CAD dispatches Engine 2 to these streets as first due. Look at a map. Station 20 is, to be safe, at the corner of Trailwood Drive and Thistledown. Engine 2 is on Pecan Rd. at South Saunders St. For some reason the CAD sees #2 as closer. I think we should look at Charlotte.They ran into this same problem with their CAD. They changed every street to have the same speed limit and the problem corrected itself. We should consider doing the same with ours.

**Guest** - 03/14/06 - 21:34

Taking speed limits into consideration is a must. Just because the truck might do 70 doesn't mean it's safe to run that even though I see fire engines running 50+ in a 35 zone all the time. If E-2 can get on I-40 and run 70 whereas E-20 has a 35 mph zone all the way, E-2 is clearly "closer" i.e. faster response time.

**guest** - 03/14/06 - 22:20

Not that we are getting into a contest here, but, if you look at the geographical location of both units houses, and the location of the streets in question, E-20 is clearly closer. No matter what the speed. 20 has to make one turn after exiting the house and go through 1 traffic light (Thistledown and Trailwood). Where 2 has to pass through 3 traffic lights on a very busy street, then build speed up an entrance ramp, exit a highway to a traffic light, then go through 2 more traffic lights on Lake Wheeler. It's a no brainer. The CAD isn't working the most effective way for the citizens and that's why we are here. It should be looked at and reviewed.

**Guest** - 03/15/06 - 03:50

Just because I'm keeping a record; Apartment fire on Orchard Hollow Drive yesterday. Dispatched in this order; Engine 2, Engine 1 and Engine 20 as 3rd due. Orchard Hollow is 1.21 miles from #20, 2.8 miles from #2, and 3.41 miles from #1. But, the CAD is never wrong.

Also, intersection of Tryon Rd. and Lake Wheeler. Had Engine 2 been in service, they would have been dispatched. However, they were not so next recommendation was Engine 1 to a MVA at this location. This intersection is 1.6 miles from #20 and 3.44 miles from #1. But, the CAD is never wrong?

**Guest** - 03/16/06 - 08:27

Something I've noticed, and maybe someone can shed a light on:

On some dispatches for RFD, it Eng, Eng, Truck, Chief. Sometimes it's Chief, Eng, Truck, Eng. If the CAD were based on a GPS system, I could understand it, but in the current configuration, I'm not sure how it is assembling the alarm.

**harkey** ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 03/16/06 - 09:48

I have noticed that too.....and would like to know what's up as well....

**Silver** - 03/16/06 - 21:28

When WC EMS went live with the CAD last year, there were several instances of furthest units being idspatched. However, many of these have been corrected...it just takes a little time.

As to the county wide numbering system, it was tried here in the 1980's...and the results were terrible. We wound up with three different systems, with multiple terminology. Some departments adopted the station and apparatus numbering system. One adopted the numbering system only (without the station numbers), and the rest kept their old numbers. And these used "ENGINE ONE", or "PUMPER ONE", or "UNIT ONE". A unit could be called "squad", "unit", or "utility" and still be the same thing. One department called their brush truck and "engine". The rescue squads did adopt a numbering system, but it never applied to WCEMS and now Cary EMS and the new Eastern Wake EMS have gotten away from it.

**Dale** ([Email](#)) - 03/21/06 - 17:16

The post above is EXACTLY why Wake County needs a comprehensive numbering system. The reason the results were terrible in the 80's is that the system wasn't comprehensive, and it sounds like departments did whatever they wanted, which is what we have now.

The one thing always pointed to after a disaster is communciations. This is one issue that could be addressed ahead of time, at very little cost. The explanation I keep getting on this: too many kingdoms, too many kings. How's that gonna play on WRAL in an Investigative Report?

**harkey** ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 03/21/06 - 23:20

To me, the county-wide numbering system would work if implemented correctly. Look at P.G. County in Maryland. The district borders D.C. and they run a heck of a lot more calls then Wake County does. If Wake County, specifically the Comm. Center, would put their foot down and say "If you use us, then you use this system", it would work. Certain criteria would have to be set up to qualify as engine companies, brush units, rescues, tower ladders and trucks, but it would work. No partial adoption of the system, either you're in or you're out.

**Jeff** - 03/21/06 - 23:21

PS: Guilford County and Greensboro are going through this process this summer. Their system is already pretty organized. Interestingly enough though, High Point will not be participating in the new system.

**harkey** ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 03/21/06 - 23:23

Harkey, just read your last blog and you are exactly right. Example; last year while listening to a certain department at a working fire , the I.C. asked for the "next available Engine to report to the scene". What he got on the dispatch from locution was "Engine 4", which was a brush unit, from his own department!! I don't think those were his intentions when asking for an additional "engine company".

Well put, too many kingdoms with too many kings.

**Jeff** - 03/21/06 - 23:26

Jeff -

You're right, the Cheif did not want our brush truck on that call. However, the attributes in CAD should have been different even thought it is named an "engine" such that an appropriate unit could have been sent. Nonetheless, that nomenclature was selected well before my time at the dept. As for other depts since I have been a member in PG county, they have a system that seems to mirror the attempt by some Wake CO depts in the 80's. Chatham Co uses a system based on station numbers too, I think, you may know more since you interat with them more than some of the rest of us. I've tried to suggest to our dept that such a system would be beneficial and that we should keep it in the back of our minds. Not only are apparatus numbering unclear, but also how many Car 1 or Car 2's are there.

**mcgraw** ([Email](#)) - 03/22/06 - 10:15

McGraw,

I complete agree with you. Since you were on in P.G., you know, the system does work, it just has to be implemented across the entire county. The deal with Chief's is another thing, some dept.'s use the old "100, 101" numbers, others use "Car 1, 2". It would just be nice to have some consistency, don't you think? How are things over your way?

**Jeff** - 03/23/06 - 18:45

Things are good, we got our new tanker in service this week. Speaking of PG, have you heard of the criminal charges stemming from fighting on the fireground. Caught on videotape. See <http://www.centrapafire.com>, there is a discussion on under thier general fire forum.

**[mcgraw]** - 03/23/06 - 20:54

Rob, hit me on my personal e-mail; [silv333@gmail.com](mailto:silv333@gmail.com) We'll talk further.....

**Jeff** - 03/23/06 - 22:48

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.

Hide email: Yes, hide my email address.

**Small print:** All html tags except <b> and <i> will be removed from your comment. You can make links by just typing the url or mail-address.