

This Morning's Fire

10/12/07 47 W, 1 I - + 13 - 14

WRAL has a [good photo](#) of this morning's fire on [Misty Oak Drive](#). Durham Highway, Bay Leaf, Stony Hill, Falls, Western Wake, Raleigh, and Wake Forest. Fairview covering at Bay Leaf. Alarm time 8:18 a.m. Under control at 9:34 a.m. [More details from FireNews](#).



did anyone get pictures?

question - 10/12/07 - 17:40

Made for a good listen with the morning coffee. Isn't it time to stop buying fire trucks and start hiring firefighters? Fairview? Anyone know the rationale here? Just interested.

Concerned Taxpayer - 10/12/07 - 17:46

And I missed it... Always miss the big one.

Lt.Eng1DHFD - 10/12/07 - 19:54

Lt. don't get me started about missing fires...ha

Snell - 10/12/07 - 20:31

It makes good sense to not pull from the next closest station when moving up for a cover assignment. You already had a large part of the county empty. So would you want to empty Swift Creek next, or skip over them and pull from Fariview? Sounded like a good department to move up from. You also have to take in account the fair going on and the possibility for a need for tenders for water supply, Swift Creek would be able to be at the grounds as quick as WW #2 since WW #1 was out on this fire.

I do agree that it is time to start hiring firefighters, all those trucks look pretty sitting in fire stations with nobody to ride on them.

CFP 7021 - 10/12/07 - 21:22

Is it true that the original size up was light smoke showing? Just wondering, that's what came across CFP. If it was, what happened?

Silver - 10/12/07 - 22:22

What I meant was; anyone that was there care to provide details?

Silver - 10/12/07 - 22:23

From my perspective, and as a disclaimer I was not there (I was at the house across town), it sounded as though the fire quickly spread and that manpower was at a premium once the spread started. Never heard the words "Second Alarm" or such used, only a cafeteria-style selection of trucks from differing depts. Good rationale about Fairview. I thought there were hydrants at the Fairgrounds?

Concerned Taxpayer - 10/13/07 - 07:30

There are plugs at the grounds few and far between, and FDC's, but access is next to impossible once the booths and tents are set up, imagine trying to not only find a hydrant that is behind a tent that is set up, but then lay a 5" line in? That's why there is 3000 gallons on site, 1000 pumper and 2000 tender.

If you want to find the plug and FDC for the Dorton Arena just walk straight through the Time Warner tent, cut a hole in the back of it and there it is! Or walk around the side and in between the tent and the stage you can barely find it.

rinse and re-apply for most of the remaining hydrants and FDC's on the grounds.

CFP 7021 ([Email](#)) - 10/13/07 - 09:30

I was one of the ones on the first in unit... we had smoke showing from all ends of the house and we tried to make a quick attack but do to the lack of manpower we couldn't get vertical or any ventilation done quick enough, thus giving absolutely no relief from the heat or smoke. We had a second line pulled to the second floor once the second due arrived. The fire spread very rapidly and after about 20 minutes of aggressive interior attack units had to be pulled out. Over all, units operating did a very good job and nobody got injured, unfortunately you cant save them all. The reason a "second alarm" wasn't requested is due to the county not having a second alarm protocol established. Units on other fires have done it before and the CAD will just re-dispatch the departments already dispatched (same thing that happened to stony hill earlier this year).

ffEng1DHFD - 10/13/07 - 21:01

Word, from Big Bird

bigbird - 10/14/07 - 22:18

Can't you take windows as you advance into the house to provide you with some relief? I know I am a big proponent of vert ventilation, but it can't always be done due to lack of manpower. You shouldn't forget horizontal ventilation.

How many people were on the first 2 pieces arriving and how far apart did they arrive from each other?

Mike - 10/15/07 - 11:21

If what I heard was right, supposedly your heavy fire involvement/spread was in the attic. While I'm a huge proponent of horizontal venting and agree it should be used more in this area (glass is cheap), horizontal might not have helped them that much in this situation.

It probably made it a little easier after the roof opened up on its' own, but by then with only one line stretched and limited manpower, it was a back up and punt situation.

Where is the focus in the county? It seems to be apparatus, not manpower. Gotta have those chrome rims and diamond plate this and that. Remember the \$84,000 brush trucks? Personally, I'd rather ride an off brand rig with painted rims and have adequate staffing versus a Pierce with all the bells and whistles and understaffed. Perfect example of the "mirage firehouse" theory.

Silver - 10/15/07 - 14:36

yeah except those pierces don't have all the bells and whistles... they might have the pierce name, but not the pierce quality.

I do agree though, the county didn't increase any funds for staffing this year, but bought Wake Forest it's 4th brush truck... will poor Fairview ever get one?

CFP 7021 - 10/15/07 - 14:44

Reference "the CAD will just re-dispatch the departments already dispatched (same thing that happened to stony hill earlier this year)."

The ONLY reason this happens is that departments insist on showing unstaffed units as "available" in CAD. If only staffed (thus available for immediate response were shown), CAD would keep on looking for available units and disregard those that are NOT available.

Skip

Skip Kirkwood ([Email](#)) - 10/15/07 - 15:03

Since when do you call those "rigs" we are riding Pierce. They might have the logo, but.... well... thats it.

Pierce - 10/15/07 - 16:36

Ok, ok "Pierce" I give....the Pierce engines are scaled down. Shall we discuss \$84,000 brush units? E-mail me and we'll talk, I know you want to remain anonymous.

It's time for Wake County to get its' s#*t together and re-organize the fire service. Standardize responses, duty crew coverage, fireground SOG's, minimum staffing levels and I can go on and on. Sorry guys, but the days of running to the firehouse with your red lights in your vehicle every time the pager goes off are on the way out.

If I offended anyone, see my disclaimer on "thewatchdesk.com" .

Stay safe....

Silver - 10/15/07 - 19:12

Forgot to leave my e-mail for "Pierce"

Silver ([Email](#)) - 10/15/07 - 19:13

Silver- 2/3 of the firemen in this country are volunteers and without them fire depts. would not be able to get anything done.

4447 - 10/15/07 - 20:01

[Query and answer about WTVD removed. Off-topic.]

Legeros - 10/15/07 - 21:52

4447 I never saw anywhere where he said remove volunteers, it is just the system needs to be revamped, volunteers play a vital role in the fire service across the country, but like Jeff said, the days of running to the station with your red light for every call need to cease in this county. Volunteers can still be a contributing factor to the fire service in Wake County, by pulling duty crews, or working rotating shifts, whatever was needed. I'd also like to wonder if 2/3 are volunteers, would we go by sheer number that are employed full time by fire departments, or the amount of FF's that are on duty at one given time. I think it would be closer towards 50% if we were talking "on duty" or "on call" but I think it would probably be closer to 2/3 paid if you took total number.

Also I think your statement needs to be reworded, departments would not be able to answer calls at nights and on weekends without volunteers. They get just as much, if not more stuff done during the daytime, paid hours than they do at night. That's just the reality. If I'm wrong about any of my statements please prove it to me. Not a bash against volly's or full time guys. It's just the nature of the beast that we're dealing with in this day and time. It's time to give the taxpayers what they expect.

CFP 7021 ([Email](#)) - 10/15/07 - 22:23

There aren't any volleys in Wake County. As far as I know just about every dept in Wake County pays their members a set amount per call and the Chiefs get a yearly amount. That is a part-time employee or paid on call FF not volunteer. Volunteers don't get paid or compensated in any way for their time.

Mike - 10/16/07 - 08:45

What if the amount is under minimum wage, wouldn't that be illegal?

Mikey - 10/16/07 - 09:57

Shev, Thanks as you've saved me from a lot of typing. "4447", I was a vollie for 12 years and thoroughly enjoyed it and actually miss it. I never said anything remotely close to "get rid of volunteers".

Silver - 10/16/07 - 10:54

Can someone help me understand the thought of marking unstaffed units out of service? I have read a lot of comments about how volunteers are important and needed which I agree 100% but if a unit is marked out of service in a department that does not have 24 hour staffing or a duty crew at that station who will go to the call, the next department over b/c their truck is in service with 2 people. I know that some departments do not have duty crews or paid staff at each station after 6pm. Example would be Fairview, no duty crews at stations just FR vehicles staffed with 1 each and fire suppression units marked out of service because of staffing. If a House Fire came in across from the

station who would be dispatched Holly Springs, Apex, Swift Creek, Garner, Fuquay and if no volunteers are monitoring the radio or the call is a 4am how will they know about the call since CAD will not dispatch unstaffed trucks, do we continue to keep trucks in service and allow the volunteers to continue to come and get trucks or have our telecommunicators call the fire chief and tell him that someone else is fighting fire in their district. Lets work together as a family to push for staffing be it full time, duty crews or increasing the volunteer ranks so no firefighter has to wait 10mins for the next crew to arrive.

[stationcaptain] - 10/16/07 - 11:34

easy fix... courtesy dispatches... dispatch the department whose district the call is in, in addition to the full assignment of staffed units. If the volly's respond to the station, let them mark the unit in service when they have the staffing and add themselves to the call if they are still closer than another unit is.

Western Wake has started doing something similar, they are not marking units out of service, but when a call is dispatched in their district the normal assignment is added and then either Car 190 or Car 290 based on which station. If it's a station 1 call Car 190 is put on the run, Station 2 call Car 290 is dispatched. If all WW units are out and say Swift Creek and Morrisville are answering a call in WW#2 district then Car 290 is dispatched as well, thus letting all the volly's (and other units on the other call) know there is a call going on in "their" district. It's a decent fix and the result of the department not knowing of a call a few blocks from one they were on and would have been able to clear up and respond to, and didn't know it until Swift Creek came by them.

CFP 7021 - 10/16/07 - 12:08

Dispatching the cars is a good idea when units are already on a call. But having the volly's put the truck in service and added to the call seems like it would add a lot of unneeded radio traffic to the dispatch or assigned channel for the already busy TC'S. Marking EMS units out of service is ok (since there are more staffed 24 hour trucks), but just not good business (my opinion) for a fire service that is understaffed and have volly's that still are important to the daily operations of this county.

[stationcaptain] - 10/16/07 - 12:46

If anything in my comments are not factual please let me know what is being posted that is not true. The truth sometimes is hard to swallow.

I just want to comment on the remarks that were made about staffing and trucks. I listened to the call and by the time command called for the appropriate amount of apparatus and personnel, all hands were called out of the house for defensive operations. WHY do we see this trend over and over dealing with FIRE DEPARTMENTS waiting until it's too late to call for support? Last time I looked at a list of Wake County Fire Departments including Raleigh & Cary there are over 20 county departments and 2 large municipal fire departments (RFD & CFD). All of these stations are manned with at least a 2 or 3 person's per Engine Company. We need to make the best of the staffing situation and stop moaning about it. Call for the resources you need up front and do your job.

Voice of Reason - 10/16/07 - 14:51

All of you are right with your points on the subject. I believe the resources in this county are not well-proportioned. You have your county EMS that has a unit or units on every corner. Now I truly understand that these units run more calls, and it is a different type of work. But what is more important? Ms. Foster's sore toe, Billy's stomach ache, Edna's chest pain that has been going on for four days or a working structure fire in Fairview, Falls, Western Wake, where people are quite possibly trapped or high amounts of property at stake. In the city, you have the same situation, five, six engines and ladder trucks in the same amount of area that a volunteer fire department serves and protects. What is the difference in House A burning in Fairview or Falls or Zebulon than House B burning in a rather large City in Wake County, NOTHING, NOTHING AT ALL. Why are we worried about putting four or five people on a truck, rescue, and ladder when there are some areas in this county with NO PERSONNEL. Reasonable explanation is right, someone will soon be killed or be sued for this crap. We need to let these decision makers come ride with us one day, let them know how it feels to be doing the work of four or five men by yourself while you are waiting for a unit to help ten, fifteen minutes down the road. Keep asking for personnel folks, let them hear your voice!

FVff754 - 10/16/07 - 15:13

[Editorial note. This thread was temporarily closed for comments. This was the result of an anonymous posting that added CAD-by-CAD comments about the fire. The comments included times, units, what was happening, who was calling for what, and opinions on same. The comments were deleted for a couple reasons. They easily met the definition of "anonymous sh&t stirring." (Dust-ups, while enormously entertaining, do not always add value.) The information was also not easily verified as valid. (No CAD terminal here at the house.) And the comments raised an important issue of fairness. (Yes, fairness.) Is it entirely fair to dissect an incident such as this one, in a public forum such as ours? Many might say yes. Or they might point to other blogs and boards that are more "wide open." There is great value in reviewing incidents among peers, no question about it. Lessons ignored are mistakes waiting to happen. But here, in this public forum and with anonymous participants, this blog operator chooses to steer clear of "corpse dissection." Period.]

Legeros - 10/16/07 - 17:03

Fairview does have a duty crew program they just started it no to long ago. They only staff one station at night and on the weekends the other station is responded to by vounteers. The FR trucks are still saffed all the time.

4447 - 10/16/07 - 20:25

I'd just like to put it out their, the crews that arrived first did the best job they could, Durham Highway was down a firefighter for the day (1 out sick) and hit a time when volunteer response is hit or miss and it turned out a miss. The fact is that until we have more firefighters on duty this problem will continue to happen. Maybe dispatching closest units only would help but only if it included RFE23 and 18 because they would be third and fourth due engine companies, behind Bay Leaf 361. It would be great if CAD wasn't a seperate system for Raleigh and Wake County if it was merged into one then the closest unit reponse currently set up would work much better, county units would also be going far into the city—it would look for the closest 1st, 2nd, and 3rd due engine companies....oh well, good job by all wish there was better staffing that day.

DHFD - 10/16/07 - 22:49

I forgot to add that the people on the duty crews are vounteers.

4447 - 10/17/07 - 06:48

Okay, I'll weigh in on this topic now. First I will say that I was NOT at the fire on Friday, heard some of the radio traffic, but wasn't there, so I am not going to Monday morning quarterback the scene operations. HOWEVER does anyone see the pattern here? More and more fires seem to be happening around the county this year it seems, which is in direct relationship to the population growth, yet how many depts increased their staffing this year? I know, I know, the county wouldn't approve any new staffing for anyone but that is still NOT a 100% valid excuse. How many depts have increased the role of their "volunteers" through mandatory duty crews and etc? How many made changes to their existing staff in an attempt to provide 24 hr coverage?

While I FULLY SUPPORT closest unit dispatches for all dues/companies ie 1st, 2nd,3rd due engine companies, 1st & 2nd due ladders & rescues, I don't think it should happen FIRST! The reason for this is that there needs to be min. staffing, min training requirements, and a COMMON incident operational plan first!! Guys, I'm sorry, but ANYTHING LESS THAN 3 TRAINED FIREFIGHTERS on a piece of apparatus is NOT getting the job done! It is time to STOP making excuses, and find ways to START getting the job done CORRECTLY!

The issue that "station captain" raises about marking units out of service and the affected dept not getting dispatched, while I see your point I can not, in good faith, support your arguement. If said dept truly wanted to do what was best for their community, they would find ways to guarantee 24 hr staffing (min 3 trained/qualified people)of at least 1 FIRE apparatus! While I still admire vols for what they do (I was one for 14 years) like others have said, the days of responding from home when the call comes in is over! If the citizen has to wait 10-15 for an unstaffed unit to get the necessary staffing & respond, then it makes more sense to allow that 2nd due staffed company handle the call. Fix the training, fix the staffing, then we can start talking about sending the closest units because I think that is what should/needs to be happening, we just need to fix the existing problems so we can get there.

stay safe out there guys

Wayne - 10/17/07 - 09:59

"The days of responding from home when the call comes in is over!" Who do you think gets that 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc apparatus out? Volunteers coming from home, work, church, supermarket, etc. While I know it's easy to think you have all the answers on how easy it would be to "fix" the problems that face the fire servce, it's not that simple. Putting 3 or 4 in a station 24 hours only answers the basic, everyday, single unit response calls, more help is still needed, and volunteers are and have been the backbone of the fire service Nationwide. Cooperation is a must between ALL departments. Don't be so eager to push our resources further away, WE ALL need them, let's work TOGETHER.

FF - 10/17/07 - 10:13

A number of commentators have regreted the lack of sufficient staffing as a problem at this fire. I question how many on-duty firefighters these writers would expect the taxpayer to fund. On the initial dispatch, forgiving the one man not on DHE1, there were two additional career four-man engine companies dispatched from Bay Leaf. Ladder 25 also responded immediately. Add to the career total, there were at least 6 Bay Leaf volunteers that responded to aid DHFD on the initial call. Any full staffing system the county would possibly employ would not provide more staffing than was available here. The true problem with this incident was the delayed reporting of the fire. It was only reported when noticed by a neighbor across the street who's view is quite hampered by the placement of the house and significant shielding by the landscaping. DHE1 positioned at the driveway. The view from this position is also poor due to the placement of the garage. Hence, I believe the initial light smoke report. This home was well involved before the units arrived and there is not much that can be done in such a case. The

fact these departments are in the county has nothing to do with the outcome here, especially when the hydrants were capable of supplying 1300GPM. Municipal departments like Raleigh and Cary are equally capable of burning down a house when there is a delayed report. It is unfortunate that the one time an automatic alarm would have helped, there was none. This is a shame when you think of all the false activations plaguing the fire service. Residential sprinklers would have been nice too, but few local governments will ever mandate them.

BLV ([Email](#)) - 10/17/07 - 10:44

"FF", so what you're saying is it's ok to just hope that someone shows up to bring you a water supply and that the system is just fine? Give me a break.

With population growth comes traffic. It will take longer to get to the firehouse from wherever you're coming from to get that 2nd or 3rd apparatus. With that population growth also comes an increase in call volume. So, there will be more times of attempting to navigate through heavily congested roadways to get those extra units, or get that 1st in unit out to the 2nd call. Let's not forget the "liability mentality" these days. More people are ready to sue these days, regardless of where you're going or what you're doing with your red lights.

I was a vollie for 12 years, I had fun and parts of me miss it. Departments are now forming duty crews which is great, which translates to the administrations ensuring "their customers" get the quickest response possible. Like Wayne said, the personnel need to be properly trained and not just bodies. This gets to my next question; why do most volunteer departments still insist that their members live within the district lines when they are having duty crews on duty? A department that is trying to add members, and staff a unit 24/7 with vollies, shouldn't care where their members live so long as they show up for their assigned duty crew(s). If you have a good foundation of members "in the district", why not venture outside of those lines to increase your numbers?

I can remember times in Apex, when the duty crew program was first implemented, I'd have 5 people working some nights, all volunteers, at one firehouse. People were taking pride, it was awesome!! We'd have a 4 man engine, with a one person "show" roving to bring a tanker or brush truck right behind us. We'd train, pre-plan, have fun, and bonds were being formed.

Volunteers still have a strong place in the Wake County fire service, but in my opinion the way they are used should be revised a little.

Stay safe guys...

Silver - 10/17/07 - 10:59

FF-

No where did I say to get rid of the volunteers, reread my entire post. I simply stated that the days of coming from home to get the necessary staffing to respond to the incidents has past, especially on the 1st alarm assignment. To answer your questions about the 2nd, 3rd, etc pieces of apparatus out, well that's where those other stations with staffing comes in to play. I have never said that I was eager to "push our resources further away" but rather better utilized them! I have never claimed to have all the answers to "fix" the fire service, however I have been affiliated with several large and small depts in my career and I have never seen a system as dysfunctional as the one here in Wake County. I'm sorry but I CAN NOT support the idea of dispatching multiple units from 1 station when there is NOT staffing present AT THE STATION to respond in the apparatus just because "this is our ISO or fire district". Send me the GUARANTEED manpower, NOT the POTENTIAL manpower because NO ONE knows what kind of turn out you will get from the vols. Not a knock but a FACT, most have jobs, family and other commitments that generally (and should) come before volunteering for the fire dept.

I will say this, and if it offends anyone then I will apologize right now, I feel that EVERY station needs to have a min. number of people to FULLY STAFF 1 piece of fire apparatus, and that the closest STAFFED units be dispatched as well as courtesy dispatching of the first due company! That way the vols have a chance to respond, but ensure that a full assignment is also responding! If the vols get to the station and get a STAFFED unit on the call (min of 3 TRAINED/QUALIFIED people) and are CLOSER than the next due company or companies, then they can respond and the other companies can go in service.

Wayne - 10/17/07 - 11:02

Wayne, I agree with you 100%. In Wake County today we need trained volunteers already at the station staffing apparatus alongside the career firefighters. Who knows if this fire would have had a better outcome if three fully staffed trucks had pulled up to scene right away, we can't tell now but I'll bet that it probably would have. Volunteers responding to the station to get trucks is fine, as long as the 1st and 2nd due trucks out of that station are already dispatched and staffed. Now we need staffed units dispatched, no question, but with that said if volunteers make it to the station and the assignment hasn't all arrived on scene and they believe they are in position to take the 3rd due engine companies position, go for it, take that truck and if you get on scene before the original 3rd due truck does then you can always cancel that truck if you already have enough help. I like the idea of responding to the station with my little red light blinking but guys we have to face it, DUTY CREWS is where we need our volunteers at now, also standing by the station while the on duty crews are out on a call. NEVER EVER

should a fire station in this county ever be left without a crew of 3 trained volunteers or/and career firefighters in it. And if your department cannot provide this when you go out on a call, you need to have another engine company transferred to your station until your units are back in service (this should be done automatically by CAD but...) I'm a volunteer in wake county and yes I still respond from the house to the fire house, but I also pull duty crew.

Today's Volunteers - 10/17/07 - 12:40

Volunteers being required to live in the district is one of those ideas that needs to go. I would jump at the chance to get back into the game, so to speak. The department in my home town is not very 'volunteer friendly'. Other departments are, but I do not live in their district. And how about people who live in Cary or Raleigh?

Hate to bring up Anne Arundel COunty again, but we had people from all over the county volunteering in our stations. The station I volunteered in was 35 minutes driving time from Fort Meade, but there I was, 12 hours a week for a long time (before I moved out of the barracks and into the fire station).

DJ ([Email](#)) - 10/17/07 - 13:18

Durham Highway does not have an in district requirement, if you live out of district you are required to run duty nights not just highly encouraged. Feel free to stop by, our meetings are Thursday's at 7pm, but feel free to stop by anytime.

DHFD - 10/17/07 - 14:30

Mike, I believe this has been the most popular thread so far!

[WCFire533] ([Email](#)) - 10/17/07 - 21:22

There have been even more popular threads, including the Redford Place fire (June 2007, 61 comments), Rolesville EMS issues (March 2007, 46 comments), mutual aid to Clayton (November 2006, 54 comments), Fire Commission news (September 2006, 65 comments), and, ahem, closest station response (August 2006, 48 comments).

Legeros - 10/18/07 - 07:31

True, forgot about those, all interesting stuff

[WCFire533] ([Email](#)) - 10/18/07 - 22:09

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 and <i> will be removed from your comment. You can make links by just typing the url or mail-address.