

**Fire Poles**

07/04/08 141 W - + 16 - 11

Who (still) has fire poles around here, or around North Carolina? And who likes or doesn't like them? The potential for injury is always cited as a reason that single-story structures are now the norm. Plus there are ADA requirements, I believe, at least for new structures. But they certainly seem increasingly uncommon. The days of towering, two-story downtown Central Fire Stations seem particularly long gone.

Where be poles?

## Raleigh

Station 1 on Dawson Street (1953)

Station 3 on East Street (1951)

Station 6 on Fairview Road (1949)

## Apex

Station 3 on Hunter Street (2002)

## Durham

Station 1 on Morgan Street (1962)

Station 2 on Ninth Street (1951)

## Asheville

Station 1 on Court Plaza (1926) ?

## Charlotte

Station 1 on Myers Street (1990)

Station 4 on Church Street (1972)

Station 5 on Wesley Avenue (1929)

Station 6 on Laurel Avenue (1929)

Station 7 on Davidson Street (1935)

## New Bern

Station 1 on Neuse Boulevard (2000)

## Rocky Mount

Station 1 on George Street (1964)

Station 6 on Rowe Drive (1989) ?

Others?

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North Lenior Fire Rescue Station 2 – Kinston between 2003-2006

**2redline** ([Email](#)) - 07/04/08 - 07:57

Chapel Hill St.1 still has a pole.

**CFP7721** ([Email](#)) - 07/04/08 - 11:28

Henderson Sta #1 (opened in 1974) and older Sta # 2 both have poles

**rnln** ([Email](#)) - 07/04/08 - 14:29

We still have one in our station in Faison (Duplin County), came out of a old Wilmington Fire Station in the 1970s.

**Lee Kennedy** - 07/04/08 - 18:08

Word is that when Cary builds Sta. 8 or in the future that the plans are to go up and not out due to land cost and this would maybe get the dept. our first fire pole(s).

**fire1983** - 07/05/08 - 09:56

Wrightsville Beach Fire Dept. has a pole in its current station and in planned replacement which should begin soon...

**WBFD** - 07/05/08 - 17:42

I think that fire1983 hit on something- land costs. While it is possible for a government entity to condemn land for public purposes (and Raleigh has demonstrated a willingness for this, at least for downtown development), a lot of other governments will shy away from it due to the threat of public furor. And if it is cheaper to go up instead of out, what politician is going to resist the ability to say "Look at all the money I saved"?

**DJ** ([Email](#)) - 07/05/08 - 20:31

Greenville F/R St 1 has one. Station was built in late 1990s.

**Steven** ([Email](#)) - 07/06/08 - 17:21

Mocksville FD has one, but most of us don't use it.

**Barrett** ([Email](#)) - 07/07/08 - 09:30

The only problem with going up in public facilities is the ADA compliance regulations. Stations with elevators will be an interesting concept. Ride up and slide down. What a life!

**Olson** - 07/08/08 - 00:25

There is an elevator in Apex #3, and the word that I'm hearing is that putting an elevator in is cheaper than the alternative, especially with land going for what it is going for in some of these areas.

**CFP 7021** ([Email](#)) - 07/08/08 - 01:19

That would be an interesting comparison- the square footage required for the additional building area, vs the costs of going up, including an elevator. Seems like when Clayton first talked about adding crew quarters to their #2 station, the cost figures in the media were an additional amount equal to the original cost of the existing building. Maybe someone from there could elaborate.

But look at the way houses are built now. Back in the 50s, 60s, and 70s they were all built, for the most part, as ranch style. Now, they are bigger, yet taller (seems like most all of the houses in the Holly Springs area are two-story).

And it is amazing how we get away from a way of doing things for the new and improved, only to realize it works better the old way.

**DJ** ([Email](#)) - 07/08/08 - 07:45

Do you suppose planners consider the social experience, when deciding to building long 'n' low versus tall 'n' high? Particularly with a two- or three-company station, a ground-level facility means that everyone is "always around." Add a story, or put nearly everything over the bays, and people can disappear.

**Legeros** - 07/08/08 - 08:04

DJ, we built a ranch house in 2004 and it cost us substantially more for the same sq ft as it would have if we would have went to a 2nd story.

Take into consideration building a 3 bay station the way that most are built with day quarters on one side and crew quarters on the other. Then think about having the same setup, only the crew quarters on top of the day quarters. you have the same sq ft but a much smaller footprint requiring less acreage to start with and less footers/foundation. Not to mention the need for running the extra mechanical, electrical, etc.

**CFP 7021** ([Email](#)) - 07/08/08 - 11:52

CFP7021, that is my point exactly. I don't think it has anything to do with a sudden penchant for multiple stories, but a matter of pure economics.

And Mike, I honestly do not think the 'social experience' has anything to really do with it. I honestly think that it is mostly a case of economics. A lot of the long-and-low stations I have seen built over the years involved donated or dedicated property. And even for those stations, there was a limit to the 'footprint of the building', which always leads to budget related cost adjustments.

And here I go again, but typically, EMS stations get 'adjusted' more than fire stations.

**DJ** ([Email](#)) - 07/08/08 - 12:06

If they really want to save money, they should start making us "hot bunk". There is a lot of wasted space that sits unused 2/3 of the year. Not that I'm for it, I could really understand if Raleigh's new stations (especially since they only have half the funding for #29) were designed that way. Build up instead of out, install an elevator and sliding board, make employees "hot bunk" instead of having their "own" living space, and you'll have a station that is 3000 sq. ft. and half the cost.

**RescueRanger** - 07/09/08 - 10:31

I disagree entirely with "hot bunking", as well as elevators for the fire stations. A closer reading of ADA requirements and subsequent legal challenges shows some delineation in where and how access is required. Some of this is tied to the type of physical requirements for a given job or profession. Some addresses how much of a facility must be accessible. A perfectly reasonable level of access might be day room areas – restroom, day room, kitchen -that is ADA compliant while the living quarters (perhaps upstairs) of the personnel assigned are not. Consider what part of a facility is considered "public access", and look at rulings as they relate to the fire service. Even public buildings-such as fire, ems, and pd, have private areas not for public viewing or access. I note we as a service do a lot of things based on he said/she said, or hearsay, or just because when a bit of investigation/reading will reveal quite a different outlook. This is a somewhat short and incomplete discussion of the subject but hopefully you get the drift.

**FYI** - 07/09/08 - 11:26

RescueRanger, it's unfortunate that the growth of the city wasn't considered back in the old days. Now, Admin has to play a game of catch-up, because we're short on ladder companies. But, they can't move any around without having to refurb a firehouse to accept said piece.

I've hot bunked before, wasn't that bad if your bunk partner was clean/sanitary. Like the saying goes; drastic times = drastic measures.

**Silver** - 07/09/08 - 12:03

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