

This Morning's Apparatus Accident / South Dawson Street

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Three firefighters were injured this morning when Ladder 4 overturned at the intersection of [South Dawson and South streets](#), while responding to a house fire at 1020 Mark Street. The [2004 Pierce Arrow XT tiller](#) overturned at 10:50 a.m., while turning east on South Street from southbound South Dawson Street. Units were dispatched to the accident at 10:52 a.m., including Engine 13, Ladder 8, Rescue 3, EMS 11, EMS 81, EMS 16, Medic 95, and District 1.

Four firefighters were aboard the truck, and three were transported to WakeMed. Two of the three firefighters received serious, but not life threatening injuries. Capt. Stephen R. Page, Lt. Jason R. Lane, and Firefighter Kelly Lamotta were listed in good condition this afternoon, and were expected to be released this afternoon. Lt. Roy McGee, also aboard, was not injured.

Other units on scene included Engine 1, Rescue 2, SR 2, Car 10, Car 4, Car 3, Car 2, and EMS 1. Fleet Services personnel responded and provided assistance to the towing company, and assisted with removing equipment from Ladder 4. Dawson Street was closed for over an hour, and South Street for over four hours, while the accident was investigated and the damaged apparatus removed.

Sources/coverage: [WRAL](#) (includes colorful/regrettable reader comments), [WTVD](#) (includes aerial photos), and the [News & Observer](#). The city of Raleigh also released a [press release](#). National coverage included [Firegeezzer](#), [Statter911](#), and [Firefighter Close Calls](#). FireNews posted their [photos and story](#) on Saturday afternoon.



WTVD photo

Just glad to hear the brothers are coming home. The truck can be replaced.

Fierro - 07/10/09 - 19:14

Amen to that!

Rides An Engine - 07/10/09 - 19:19

Glad to hear your all ok you are in are thoughts out here in New Bern.

JD - 07/10/09 - 20:05

Glad the guys are going to be ok. Some of those comments on wral's site were uncalled for. They should have closed the comment part of that story before they did. In the 16 years I've been a firefighter in Columbus County I've heard more negative comments than Thank Yous, that's life I guess. Like someone else said trucks can be easily replaced, firefighters can't. Thoughts and prayers are with the crew of L-4, RFD, and their families.

[fbfrjm837] (Email) (Web Site) - 07/10/09 - 21:13

Glad it looks like the guys from Sta 1 are going to be ok. And thank goodness that someone with sense over at WRAL Golo locked up that thread with the tasteless comments. Again: Main thing is that the bravest from Sta 1 are ok.

Marshall Sherard KE4ZNR (Email) (Web Site) - 07/10/09 - 23:08

I am truly glad all of my friends are OK. I was there today and it was a very, VERY uneasy and unnerving sight.

Now, ask yourselves why do fire apparatus accidents occur? We can choose multiple reasons, and sometimes it is truly out of our control; but I cannot dismiss two of the prevailing elements when emergency vehicles are involved: SPEED and INTERSECTIONS.

I challenge all of the emergency responders reading this post to do their best and not allow another one of these accidents to occur. Naturally, we can't control everything on the road (like other drivers), but we can all do our part to REDUCE RISK when driving to an incident. Also remember that seat belts only keep us safer IN an accident. So, to all... DRIVE SAFE and WEAR YOUR SEAT BELTS.

A.Rich - 07/10/09 - 23:32

Just wondering, will any of the city's other ladders fit in station 1? I stopped by a year or so ago when I was in town and the Tiller looked like it was a close fit. As I said earlier: Glad the guys are ok.

[fbfrjm837] (Email) (Web Site) - 07/11/09 - 07:57

Ladder 4 was returned to service that evening with Ladder 111, a 1995 Simon-Duplex aerial platform that's a reserve unit. Lee Wilson posted some pics of the truck being readied yesterday: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/leewilson/a..>

Legeros - 07/11/09 - 08:10

Glad the crew is ok. Any idea on the extent of damage to the apparatus yet? The cab looked to be intact pretty well.

jetexas - 07/11/09 - 09:00

From what I heard the truck was a total loss. The shop guys are going to try to salvage what they can from it (lights, equipment, etc.) before it heads to the scrap yard.

RescueRanger - 07/11/09 - 10:10

Glad to hear everyone is ok. Another case of you never know what will happen, like AC said seatbelts everytime. If truck is totaled will they get another tiller or standard ladder?

Apex Batt Chief - 07/11/09 - 10:34

I overheard another tiller would be coming, but it's too early to confirm now. The "tillers" are less expensive than the standard ladders (straight truck). Whatever the case, it will take a little over a year once ordered.

A.Rich - 07/11/09 - 11:55

Heard the same thing A.C.

Silver - 07/11/09 - 15:51

FireNews has posted their photos, <http://firenews.net/index.php/news/news..>

And I've posted some photos of the tiller as it was, <http://www.legeros.com/ralwake/photos/20..>

Legeros - 07/11/09 - 19:11

Please forgive my ignorance of the subject, but as an outsider looking in, I wonder why is this a total loss. The body damage of the rig doesn't look too bad, based on the pictures. Can it not be repaired, or is it more of a structural integrity issue, kind of like how they say that once a child seat has been in a wreck, you need to not use it again? Or is there a lot of "internal" that cannot be seen? I am very glad no one was seriously injured, especially looking at the pictures of the tiller cab.

Native Charlottean - 07/11/09 - 21:49

Is there any way to add any structural integrity to tillerman's cab without sacrificing visibility or function? It appears that there's absolutely nothing to protect the tillerman in the event of a rollover, evident in L-4's incident. Thank goodness there weren't any more significant injuries! Be safe out there brothers!

Rides An Engine - 07/11/09 - 22:47

It's a total loss because damages are estimated to be in excess of \$900,000 which is more than one can be purchased for new.

RescueRanger - 07/11/09 - 22:48

RescueRanger I don't know where your info is coming from but as of Sunday they are still waiting on the Pierce reps to come and look at the truck. I am just glad they are all ok.

[collie] ([Email](#)) - 07/12/09 - 09:05

Firegeezzer has posted a second update to the story, referring to the FireNews story. Reader comments are commencing,

<http://www.firegeezzer.com/2009/07/11/ral..>

Legeros - 07/12/09 - 09:10

First, another amen that the everyone walked away. It's a terrible pain that strikes at times like these, but it does fade and perhaps in relative proportion to the reassurance that the crew is really okay. Yeah, folks are still shaking, but it gets better.

As for the truck, here's my high-level understanding of what happens after an apparatus accident. First, the rig is recovered, and with great care to minimize additional damage. Next, it's stripped of portable equipment, which goes on the replacement rig. Next, it's assessed. Chassis, body, pump, engine, ladder, etc. Top to bottom, soup to nuts. Experts might be local, regional, factory, etc.

They'll reach a decision on next steps. Presumably, this takes several days, or maybe a couple weeks? There's also a finance/insurance piece/process, which adds another period of time, as the Financial Powers That Be assess the assessment, and reach their decision on next steps. How long does the whole kit and caboodle take? Maybe a couple months?

So, for all the things we hear and the speculations we swap, we're still waiting on more facts.

Legeros - 07/12/09 - 11:19

Glad everyone is okay. One comment caught my attention. Tillers are less expensive than standard ladder trucks? I thought that tillers were far more expensive. Why is that? And why does Raleigh not have more tillers to navigate the tight downtown streets if they are less expensive anyhow?

Had No Idea - 07/12/09 - 11:22

I would have thought more expensive as well. As for why aren't there more of them, my guess is that the skill level (and therefore training costs) to drive them is higher, you have to have two guys in synch all the time or exactly what happened here is the result (according to the police report at least, i.e. cab went left tiller didn't). I can see this accident being the "end of the tiller experiment" in a lot of places.

JLH - 07/12/09 - 11:56

As for why we don't have more tillers, most of our stations barely fit "regular" fire equipment. Just not that many stations that a tiller will fit in.

Here's to looking forward to a speedy (tillered) replacement! So very glad all were treated and released.

And I would write an editorial to that pin-headed N&O for their headline "Turn Flubbed," but they're not worth the time nor effort.

harkey ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 07/12/09 - 15:02

Talked to some folks this morning that are not fire service related. They couldn't believe how a truck that large could roll over on its roof, and the cab appeared virtually intact. The rear didn't fair as well, but I sure it had a tremendous amount of pressure on it. Kudos to all the apparatus manufacturers that are making these vehicles safer. Unfortunately, there has been several accidents locally over the last year and the trucks have held up well (in the personnel protection area).

Chris - 07/12/09 - 18:04

Any word on whether the rig is totaled or repairable? How are the injured members doing at this point?

Rides An Engine - 07/28/09 - 13:04

My 2 cents worth— hopefully this will not sour departments on tillered apparatus. Their maneuverability and adaptability are huge assets for for

access to the tight areas an aerial apparatus is often needed. Many are the times an aerial has had to sit out on the street instead of in the complex because they are simply too big and lack the ability to maneuver. I speak from experience here. If you still have reservations increase the quantity and more importantly, the quality, of our emergency driver training-with specialization for specific apparatus types!

Goose - 07/29/09 - 11:41

Not that it had anything to do with the accident, but, take the dang pumps and tanks off of the tillers too!!! That would shorten 'em up, get them in more firehouses, and get 'em even closer.

Cost does have some part of the formula, because you'd have two driver positions for one company, not one. So the cost to promote three (one extra per shift) extra drivers per tiller company would add up.

As far as the rig, I heard from a source that the pump and motor might be salvageable, which would help with the replacement cost. As far as the members, I've heard from 3 out of 4, they seem to be doing just fine. Anyone have the status of the boss?

Silver - 07/29/09 - 16:34

For the sake of the next crew on it, I hope they replace the whole truck and reuse nothing. They're never the same again after a rollover, no matter who made them. That's a lot of weight to sling around.

AB - 07/29/09 - 19:00

From what I understand, when Engine 9 was repaired, Pierce reused a good portion of that truck and the driver's there say it drives just as good as before the accident.

Just sayin' - 07/29/09 - 20:41

I agree with Silver in that it wasn't the cause of the accident, but get rid of the pump and tank and attack lines. They are not needed on a ladder and like Silver said it would shorten up the truck allowing for it to fit in more stations. Also the longer something is the less stable it will be, so shortening up the tiller may not make a huge difference in its stability but it would help some. But the real issue with the accident comes down to one thing and that is all the transferring Raleigh does. Stop the transferring and allow individuals to stay at a station their career unless they get promoted out or ask for a transfer. This allows driver operators and all personnel at their stations to learn everything they need to know in their territories. Also they become proficient in knowing about and operating the apparatus they are assigned too. Transferring never allows this to happen because you are never able to learn the territory and you are constantly starting over learning a new territory and in alot of cases starting over on a new or different piece of equipment. This may have not been the case in this situation but it would go along way in helping to keep apparatus accidents from happening so frequently.

wfd - 07/29/09 - 21:10

Wfd – I don't know what FD you work at, but before you make a statement like that you need to sit down and look at the logistics of transferring people. The chiefs are seeing things that people at yours and my pay grade cannot see. I challenge you to sit down with your FD roster and say a vacancy comes up, fill it. Now an academy graduates with 25 recruits, assign them, and a new engine goes in service, another academy of 18 recruits, plus 4 retirements. Catch my drift. I don't care how FDNY does it, this is Raleigh (the FDNY is the exception not the norm). Philly transfers people periodically (straight out Chief McGrath's mouth) as does Boston. I'm not defending "recreational transfers" and transferring just to transfer, but how proficient do you think one would be who came out of the academy and went straight to E-28 and stayed there for 9 years until he got promoted. I feel D/O's and captains (in that order) should not be transferred as much as a probie or newer FF. But change is good. As diverse as Raleigh is, everyone needs to be exposed to the Northside, the Bottom, NCSU, Downtown and the people and the buildings of those particular areas. Not to mention the different types of equipment the city has. I've heard your argument the entire 11 years I've been on the job, and made it myself when I was new. But as I got transferred and learned the different areas, it didn't seem as bad. My paycheck even followed me every other Friday. I've seen people who have been at stations for quite awhile act worse than my 4 year old when they got moved. As a wise old captain told a member of his crew one time " you work for the Raleigh Fire Department, not station 8."

Silver – As for ladders not needing pumps, let's get rid of the haligan, axe, 24' extension ladder and 12' roof on engines. We only need water, a pump, hoses and EMS kits on engines right. Just because a ladder has a pump doesn't mean Ladder Company ops aren't properly performed on the fireground. What about aerial ops at fires, should we tie up an engine for an every elevated master stream? How do you explain to John Q. Taxpayer when his house is on fire and E-8 and E-20 are on a vehicle fire on I-40 and Ladder 7 is first due with no water, pump, and hose? I'm sorry sir we are a ladder company, we don't put fire out, we force doors, vent roofs and search and rescue. Ladder Company personnel should be smart enough to act as an engine when the event arises that they need to. If they cannot, back through the academy they go. What about the D/O who has been on a ladder without a pump for say 7 years, how well do you think his pumping skills will be, not to mention EMS skills (see reply to wfd). I was on a ladder for nearly six years, and want to go back to one in the near future, but for the sake of becoming

better at my job, I needed to get back on the engine. In fact if it was up to me, I think everyone should have spent some time on ladder before they could be promoted to captain, but that is in a dream world and neither here nor there. I'll close with two quotes: the first is from FDNY Division Chief John Norman on page 2, last paragraph of Concept 01: "The FDNY has an old saying that has been proven time and time again. Enginemen love it and truckies hate it, but it's true: more lives are saved by properly positioned hoselines than any other means!" and the second is, "I don't care how well you can force a door, vent a roof or perform a search, if you do not put water on the fire, it WILL NOT go out" – me!!!

Jakey - 07/30/09 - 10:06

AMEN!

Finally - 07/30/09 - 12:48

Bold statements while you sit back and hide behind your made-up screen name. Give me a break dude, you're acting like a girl I use to date; one extreme to another. I'm in a ladder company that has a pump and tank. On the northside, we need it. Engine 4 could be out, then bam, we're first due on a job. A downtown ladder, however, wouldn't be too bad without a pump or tank. We had one for years, the Seagrave, ran great and all we had was a can. Did they/we ever get caught with their pants down? No, not to my knowledge, and the three years I rode it we never did. I can take your extreme the other way too. Put pumps and tanks on the rescues, because we might need them one day. Get proficient in your can usage, it can put out a decent amount of fire. Put a gate valve in a compartment on the ladder if it doesn't have a pump, with some 1.5" hose and a smooth bore. Hook it to a hydrant if you need water that bad. Nobody mentioned FDNY, but yourself. I'll mention Philly, since you did. Lieutenants and Captains are transferred every three years. A Lieutenant in Philly, however, is a company officer, not a driver. Firefighters (who can also rotate as drivers) can remain at the same company their entire career if they so choose, and as long as they don't promote or piss anyone off, that's from an active Lieutenant on the job there.

I do agree, if someone chooses to take the promotional path, it is great to be moved to experience different things. We don't get fires like your bigger cities, so it's tough to develop a decent officer who has been sitting at E-28 for 20 years, then becomes Captain and gets moved to a downtown company (talk about shell shock). However, there's something to be said also for a member that's proficient in truck work/ engine work, and that only comes with time and jobs.

Your closing statements show you're loyal to an engine company. I'm glad to see the banter finally, because that's what we truly need. I'll counter with this, when you're tugging on your little hose, the real men are doing work so please step aside. Heard this the other day in Baltimore; an engine man IS indeed good for something, a speed bump for truckies.

Stay safe...

Silver - 07/30/09 - 14:52

Pearce E-2/B I still love you Bro!!!!!!

Jakey - 07/30/09 - 16:15

One phrase says it all around this place: "Engine company oriented fire depts." Enough said!

Wayne - 07/30/09 - 16:52

Silver – You know where my loyalties lie, we have talked for years about the importance of ladder company ops and how lacking RFD has been in implementing them. I think that we are slowly changing directions, but it is still going to take time. I think that out of all the chiefs in Raleigh, two really understand the importance of them, McGrath and Chief Rob. It's a training issue from the chief officers all the way down to the recruits. I still will have to disagree about putting the pump and hose on the ladders, you don't have to use them, but it is nice to have it in case we have to. As for a fire on the Seagrave, we came upon a vehicle fire after being cleared from a fire alarm and used the can and CO2 and not until E-14 showed up did the fire go out. Talk about feeling useless. I still stand by my comment, water puts the fire out. But I also believe that good ladder company ops can make an Engine company shine.

Pearce, aka Jakey - 07/30/09 - 17:34

Ya'll can stop shooting the horse anytime. I believe its dead. :)

KC

gen3fire - 07/30/09 - 18:34

I KNEW IT!!!! Well, out of all the people at the RFD, you're one bro that I'll always love, and I mean that. You too K.C. Now I'm getting all sappy and crap, dang it!

The ladder ops committee is making huge strides, and I think those that here because they truly love the job, will be impressed with both the engine and truck ops changes, truck ops especially.

Silver - 07/30/09 - 18:59

It must be nice to have ALL those folks in a department to where you can actually have truck crews and engine crews. Some of us at the southern end of the county have to do it all!! Man up!! LoL! Yall guys stay safe!

Triple T - 07/31/09 - 09:27

Ok, "triple-t"...thanks for the input.

Silver - 07/31/09 - 12:03

hey anytime "silver"

Triple T - 07/31/09 - 12:50

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

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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.