

Learning Your Ladders

07/31/09 198 W - + 17 - 11

Still learning the new numbers for the city's ladders and rescues? Here are some memory aids to assist in that endeavor:

- Ladder 1 - The number ONE points upward, as if pointing north. Ladder 1 is north-side.
- Ladder 2 - Housed at Station 11. One plus one equals TWO.
- Ladder 3 - The number THREE points left, or west. Ladder 3 is west-side.
- Ladder 4 - Housed at Station 1, which has two engines, one ladder, and one field communications unit. Total apparatus equals FOUR.
- Ladder 5 - Housed at Station 22. Two plus two equals four. Add the number one, which looks like an arrow pointing north, since this ladder is also north-side. Two plus two plus one equals FIVE.
- Ladder 6 - Housed at Station 24. Two plus four equals SIX.
- Ladder 7 - Housed at Station 20, which opened in 1989. The last digit of that year is nine. Nine minus two minus zero equals SEVEN.
- Ladder 8 - Housed at Station 26. Two plus six equals EIGHT.
- Rescue 1 - Housed at Station 19, which is located east of Capital Boulevard, which is also called Highway ONE.
- Rescue 2 - Housed at Station 7, a building that has, unusually, TWO front doors.
- Rescue 3 - Housed at Station 14. Four minus one equals THREE.

Next, maybe we can learn the locations of all EMS units!

Legeros - 07/31/09 - 18:48

Please no, I already have a headache!

Aspirin - 07/31/09 - 19:43

Don't need four rescues in this city; two with a full crew would be perfect.

Silver - 07/31/09 - 21:05

Actually, that really hepled. At least for me.

Fierro - 08/01/09 - 06:51

Wish we had more personnel on the rescues we now have-but no less than we now have. I remember well trying to cover our city on two trucks-it was difficult then, and the city has grown tremendously over the years. There are a lot of miles from one side to the other now. I do think we-or rather the public we serve- might benefit from better placement.

Goose - 08/01/09 - 23:45

I agree with Goose. How does Philly do it?...

A.Rich - 08/02/09 - 09:25

We have two rescues here in Charlotte, which I believe carry a full crew. I believe that when a rescue unit is needed, CFD units in the outskirts of town call heavily on volunteer departments with rescue companies rather than Rescue 3 or 10. They can get there quicker and provide adequate manpower.

Native Charlottean - 08/02/09 - 16:46

Native,

You are correct. Charlotte rescue companies are staffed with 5 members: 1 Captain, 1 FF/Engineer (driver), and 3 FF/EMT's. I know that Steele Creek, West Meck, North Meck Rescue, Newell, Pineville, and Providence get used quite a bit on the outskirts of town. There is talk of adding a third rescue, probably in the University area, but that still leaves a large gap of rescue coverage in south and southwest Charlotte, as well as there not being enough call volume to support 3+ rescues. Rescue companies here only go to "confirmed" incidents; problem there is alarm will upgrade something based on information given by the caller, and once a unit arrives on scene, it turns out to be minor or non-existent.

The thing that I haven't figured out yet is Charlotte is a north-south city, but the two rescue's are located east-west, with no good way to get northeast or southwest from their current stations.

Rides An Engine - 08/02/09 - 20:14

Native Charlottean, Rides an Engine, could the East, West placement of the rescues be related to the fact that both are along the older major commuter roads in Charlotte? By this I mean back when CFD first started the rescues they weren't more than equipment vans so maybe it was to be near major roads for auto extrication before they turned into the beasts they are today. Also wasn't Charlotte Life Saving still in service up until the early 90's? If I recall they used to go city wide. Either way Charlotte could use another rescue but I was told that the ladder companies are able to do most of the extrication work...

DC - 08/03/09 - 08:02

Yes, DC, those are good points. All ladder companies carry extrication equipment, so the Rescues are really more for specialized calls, such as mass casualties, swift water, etc. I believe they do respond to pin ins and entrapments, however I'm sure the ladder companies do most of the extrication.

I believe Charlotte Lifesaving disbanded in the late 1990's. They responded countywide.

Native Charlottean - 08/03/09 - 08:13

Just wanted to add a few things to Rides an Engine's post... The volunteer rescues are used occasionally, I wouldn't say that we use them that often (even on the outskirts). The biggest issue (countywide) is that you never really know what the staffing will be when that unit arrives. It is for that reason, and the fact that if their equipment breaks we have a back-up on the way, that we will always continue to send a city rescue even if a county unit is also responding; unless, of course, both are tied up (which is pretty rare). Another option that we have is to send 2 ladder companies. That last option does not occur that often either, but if both rescues are tied up and we're requesting something from the county there really is no telling how long it will take the county unit to get there. I think if this county went to part-time staffing at ALL volunteer stations, we'd be more inclined to request those units.

Rides an Engine is correct that we do upgrade a lot of calls based on what MEDIC tells us. Unfortunately, we don't have the luxury of speaking to most of the callers reporting the MVAs and MEDIC will advise us that it's an entrapment when the majority of the time we pull up and find that all patients are free. Our hands are tied, but I guess in the long run it's better to get the equipment headed that way and turn them around than it is to be standing on scene waiting for their arrival.

Even with those "unnecessary" (that's not the best term) upgrades and the ever popular "MVA-Involving a Building," we still rarely find ourselves in situations in which both of our rescues are unavailable.

Basically the rescues respond to: working fires, the obvious rescue calls (water/trench/high angle/confined space), pin-ins/entrapments (MVA, machinery, traumatic accidents), all high-risk boxes, and other "significant" incidents. With that said, the two rescue companies each run between 1200-1500 calls a year which, as Rides an Engine mentioned, really isn't that much for two companies.

Is Raleigh still running with 2 man rescue companies?

Luke - 08/04/09 - 01:59

Yes Luke, 2-man rescues....A.C., c'mon now!! Since you asked, Philly has one heavy rescue, supplemented by a few "squad" engine companies. One of the Charlotte guys said it perfect, "the call volume doesn't support it".

Silver - 08/04/09 - 21:44

Jeff, you know what I mean... so does everyone else.

A.Rich - 08/04/09 - 22:59

IIIIIIII knowwwwww.....just playin'.

Silver - 08/05/09 - 09:16

So, if we go with the "call volume dosen't support it", should we not do away with USAR, hazmat, and some of the slower engine companies? That statement is a little tongue in cheek but you get the idea. It seems to me that we need at least four rescues, one per battalion. The way it stands now, alot of the time the search work is done by the time the rescue gets on scene. Not trying to knock the rescue folks at all, they just have some long runs to get to some of their calls.

firedriver - 08/05/09 - 22:07

firedriver... I can see where you're coming from, to a degree, but that justification is being used in relation to adding additional companies, not simply justifying the existence of certain companies (haz-mat, USAR, etc.). In reference to the slower engine companies, other considerations would be response times to those areas, projected growth/development/annexations, and overall city planning (at least that's some of the considerations where I am). Even if those companies only respond to 700 calls a year, don't those citizens deserve the same level of service as everyone else?

I do "get your drift" with what you're saying though.

Luke - 08/06/09 - 02:04

Take a look at just about every major city and how they use their "heavy rescue" companies. This concept isn't new. I know this is Raleigh; blah, blah, blah, and I love going to work every day. However, there's no reason to re-invent the wheel here. If rescues were forever going to be 2-man crews, sure, put another ambulance in service and put one in each battalion (that's what our "rescue" company program was originally put in service as, medical transport, was it not?). But, they aren't going to be. Eventually, you'll see 4-person crews, with a Captain and three members. For comparison sake; Mikey L. can you put together something to compare a) number of heavy rescues b) city size/ dept. strength c) annual call volume for dept. and company? Here are just a few that I know of; Charlotte = 2, Greensboro = 1, Atlanta = 1 (think it was shut down though due to \$\$\$), Richmond = 3, DC = 3, Baltimore = 1, Philly = 1, Newark, NJ = 1, FDNY = 5.

To me, Raleigh is more of a North/South city, versus East/West. Put a HEAVY rescue in a prime location for North, and a second in a prime spot to serve the Southside. It's a roll of the dice on the arrival order, when the rescue arrives. Rescue 2 and Rescue 1 seem to see a little more fire than Rescue 3, but that's just the way it goes.

You'll soon see the rescues incorporated into "truck ops", due to understaffed ladder companies. If a ladder arrives first, they grab a primary and then the rescue grabs a secondary (and vice-versa). The ladder ops, and rescue ops to an extent, are going to be enhanced in the upcoming months. It'll be better for accountability, fireground operations, and ensuring that all of the truck ops are being completed at every fire.

Fire away folks (ducking)....and as always, be safe.

Silver - 08/06/09 - 11:50

The problem with the rescue companies is it's hard to convince the city council that more funding is needed for manpower, additional equipment, etc. since rescue companies have no effect on ISO.

RescueRanger - 08/06/09 - 14:08

True RR, but, our Chief is well aware that a crew of two is ridiculous and eventually resolve the issue, it's just not a huge priority right now. But, it will change.

Silver - 08/06/09 - 14:43

in durham, their two man squad trucks, respond to med calls, rescue calls, and fire calls, and on fire calls, they report to the officer on the ladder truck, and do "truck ops".

charles ([Email](#)) - 08/06/09 - 15:31

Yeah, I was there when they went from a true rescue company (3 men and an officer) to the squads exclusively, talk about a morale killer. It was done originally to take "a burden" off of the engine companies (2 firefighter/EMT's on an old parks and rec pick-up truck w/ a jump bag). I'm not sure if I'd use that move as a model to go by. Any Bull City Brothers on here I think will back me up, that at that time, the head man in charge wasn't really steering the ship in a pro-active direction.

While the squads do supplement the trucks, Rescue 1 had some of the best and respected guys on the job. They were among your most aggressive as well, and usually performed a search and opened up the interior.

While being on one of the "squads" was fun if you had a buddy of yours, the rags they gave us to run in were baaddddd.

Silver - 08/06/09 - 15:45

Some quick stats...

Atlanta – 1 rescue? – 36 stations including airport – ? engines – 132 square miles – 537,958 people – 59,297 calls last year

Baltimore – 1 rescue – 40 stations – 36 engines – 81 square miles – 640,000 people – 235,000 calls per year – Rescue 1 with 2,072 calls last year

Boston – 2 rescues – 35 stations – 33 engines – 47.3 square miles – 574,283 people – 70,176 calls last year – Rescue 2 with 2,166 calls last year

Charleston – no rescue – 16 stations – 23 engines – 178.1 square miles – 126,567 people – ? calls per year

Charlotte – 2 rescues – 40 stations including airport – 41 engines – 280.5 square miles – 716,874 people – 84,364 calls in 2006 – Rescue 10 with 1,242 calls last year

District of Columbia – 3 rescues – 33 fire stations – 33 engines – 68.3 square miles – 591,833 – 150,000 calls a year – Rescue 1 with 3,352 calls last year

Durham – 2 rescues – 15 stations – 15 engines – 94.9 square miles – 217,847 people – 19,013 calls last year – Squad 1 / 2,212, Squad 2 / 1,522, Squad 3 / 1,786 calls last year

Greensboro – 1 rescue – 23 stations – 23 engines – 144.67 square miles – 258,671 people – 30,000+ calls per year – Rescue 5 with 1,406 calls in FY08

New York – 5 rescues – 221 stations – 196 engines – 322 square miles – 8,250,567 people – 473,335 fire calls last year – Rescue 2 with 3,291 calls last year

Philly – 1 rescue – 63 stations including airport – 56 engines – 135 square miles – 1,447,395 people – ? fire calls per year – Rescue 1 with 1,645 calls last year

Raleigh – 3 rescues – 26 stations – 27 engines – 140 square miles – 385,507 people – 36,807 calls last year – Rescue 7 / 870, Rescue 14, 722, Rescue 19 / 591 calls last year

Legeros - 08/06/09 - 20:00

Silver- I agree with you on the rescues needing more staffing...completely. The other problem I see here in Raleigh is if we drop to 2 rescues I feel certain that one of them will be forever out of service training (if USAR ain't enough, think about all the live burn training at KTC that will have to be split between just 2 rescues), leaving 1 rescue for the whole city. That might be ok if we refigure our fireground ops, assigning search duties to the second due engine or something like that.

Brothers in the queen city- Do you have someone assigned to search duties as standing orders?

firedriver - 08/06/09 - 22:16

Firedriver, fireground ops WILL be changing, committees are already in place and meeting. What I envision, is you'll have your first due engine making their way to the seat of the fire, searching in the path they move of course and making any obvious rescues if they come across one. Second due engine will be pulling a second line and finishing up the hydrant hook-up for the first due, then the ladder interior crew or the rescue performing a primary (depends on arrival order) and the other performing a secondary.

Now, if a person is screaming that someone is inside, everything shifts to the life hazard. But, bread and butter fires, you'll have your ladder or rescue performing a primary.

As for Durham's two rescues, I think one of them is Rescue 7, which at last sighting is their box truck that transports the big stuff for trench and collapse rescue, not really a "rescue company". They did run three, 2-man squads (Squad 1, 2, and 4). Scuttlebutt from a source in the Bull City would be to eventually (long term planning) get rid of the squads and put two "service companies" in service with full crews. What will they call them? Rescues, Squads, Trucks...who knows, but they'd put them in service at an attempt to improve their ISO rating, might improve morale too.

Silver - 08/07/09 - 00:15

firedriver... The SOGs do not specifically dictate assignments for first, second, third, fourth, etc. arriving companies (except for High Rise fires); instead, they simply list what the engine/ladder/rescue primary functions/responsibilities on the fire scene **should** be. There are 7 primary

functions listed for the engine companies, 11 primary functions listed for the ladder companies (including search), and 14 primary functions listed for the rescue companies (most of which are also listed under the engine/ladder functions).

Search and rescue is listed as a function of both the ladder and rescue companies, and is generally assigned to the first arriving ladder company (or possibly the rescue if they arrive before the ladder). So although it's typically preferred that a ladder or rescue be assigned to search, it isn't a "standing order" and an engine could be asked to complete a search depending on the circumstances on scene.

Pretty much what Silver mentioned in his first paragraph is the way things go. First engine fire attack (and if possible lay supply line), second engine secure water supply (if forward lay was not completed by first engine) and second line, third engine second line if there is not already one in service (and possibly search), fourth engine is RIT or any other function still outstanding, ladder (search/vent), rescue (search/vent/other).

Luke - 08/07/09 - 05:37

durham needed a second rescue truck when it still ran rescue 11. and instead they went to the three squads. in the future they may reinstate the rescue with probably two rescue trucks running east and west through the bull city. other than the squads, they do have the rescue 7[tactical rescue truck] and station 16 personal is their usar team. they also put extrication tools on e13, e6 and on the ladder trucks, which should also include e16, and e7 being that they are quints.

charlie - 08/07/09 - 11:52

Rescue unit run totals added to above stats.

Legeros - 08/08/09 - 13:05

Thanks Luke.

Am I understanding correctly, you have 4 engines on structure fire response, and none of them are dedicated to RIT?

It would be nice if we added a fourth engine when/if we cut back on rescue companies.

firedriver - 08/08/09 - 19:25

I'll disagree gently with you "firedriver". A lot of city departments don't even send the rescue on an initial dispatch. Charlotte, for example, doesn't on the initial. But, their dispatchers know if they're receiving multiple calls, the rescue might be added (or add themselves) to get a jump start. Luke, that's still the way you guys are doing it, right?

If this whole rescue thing were to change, I'd like to see 3 engines, 2 ladders, and a battalion on the initial. That way, you'd have 2 & 2 going to work and one in RIT versus a bunch of engine companies. The "working fire dispatch" would then get you a heavy rescue, safety engine, cascade, battalion and a division chief, as well as the arson unit.

Speaking of dispatches, in my opinion, admin should take a long, hard look at our dispatch protocols. They're old and antiquated (includes doing away with the "major working fire" terminology, if you need a second alarm, ask for it). On an accident involving a bus, a full assignment should be sent. EMS treats it as a mass casualty incident, as should we. A fire at a hospital shouldn't get the same compliment of equipment as a 900 sq. ft shotgun house. When a second alarm is hit, go to a 3 engine, 1 ladder dispatch as to not eliminate all of your "rescue" resources in the city, with the 3rd engine beefing up the RIT. Also incorporate into the second alarm, a dispatch for your Ops Chief. There's a lot we could do with the CAD, would a liaison from the FD to the comm center be a good move to get things set up? I'd volunteer...

Be safe boys and girls....

Silver ([Email](#)) - 08/09/09 - 11:07

Silver... In the end we are thinking the same. I guess I was getting at adding another company and engine was the first thing that came to mind. It would probably make more sense to add a second ladder(that would be a ladder with a pump, hehe).

firedriver - 08/10/09 - 00:09

Well, when that's all we've got, it'll do!! Hahahahaha....

Silver - 08/10/09 - 00:33

firedriver – You are correct, it is not written out in black and white which company will fulfill each task, including RIT. That is something that is determined by the IC depending on his current needs and the situation on scene. Typically you'll either hear the 4th engine or the rescue

company get assigned to RIT. In the event that firefighters need to be rescued (heaven forbid), the Rescue company would be the primary company in charge of performing that rescue. They have additional training and equipment (above just a RIT bag). Either way, RIT is covered on scene as dictated by the IC.

Silver, that is correct. The initial box assignment for a fire is 3 Engines, 1 Ladder, and 1 BC. The "working fire" upgrade brings 1 Engine, 1 Rescue, and 1 BC... for a total of 4E, 1L, 1R, and 2BC. A second alarm would get 3 Engines, 1 Ladder, and 1 BC. Now a High Rise/High Risk structure initially gets: 4 Engines, 2 Ladders, 1 Rescue, and 2 BCs. A second alarm would get an additional 4 Engines, 2 Ladders, and 1 BC (with a second BC responding to Communications while remaining in service). No matter what the call is, the rescues are more than welcome to request to be added to any call. Most of the time they'll call us and ask us if we think they should head that way; if it sounds like it'll be burning or if it is in either E03 or E10's area, they will typically ask to be added before we upgrade.

Very rarely will you ever see both rescues working on the same incident. The crews that are housed with R03 and R10 (Engine 3 and Engine 10) are all cross-trained and maintain the same training as the rescue folks. If they needed additional personnel, it would be more common to see them request the engine from their station versus the other rescue.

Luke - 08/10/09 - 02:29

Raleigh only has one Rescue

Loop A - 09/30/14 - 15:36

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.