

Last Night's Major Fire / Armadale Lane

03/24/10 771 W, 3 I - + 10 - 13

Three alarms at [2806 Armadale Lane](#), at northeastern edge of city. Or fourth-alarm equivalent, if you prefer. Incorrectly cited in news reports as Wake Forest address. See county [IMAPS application](#) for map with street names. Dispatched address was two-story, wood-frame, vinyl-sided dwelling. Built 2007 with 3,174 square-feet, and one of seven closely spaced homes on a semicircular block. Buildings used as model homes prior to residences. Dispatched address was second house from west end.

Engine 28 first on scene with three structures on fire. Two fully involved, and third partially involved. Declared major working fire. Limited size-up due to heavy smoke and poor visibility. Engine caught own hydrant, and proceeded to last house on east side of block, the farthest exposure from the burning structures. Crews extended hand lines to middle of the block, to protect the first unburned exposure on the east side.



Lee Wilson photo

Battalion 1 assumed command on arrival, and began strategic placement of units for defensive ops. Third alarm requested within minutes. Steady winds also spread flames on ground, which damaged or started fires at the other four houses on the block. Last house on east end suffered extensive damage in rear of structure, from flames spreading on ground.

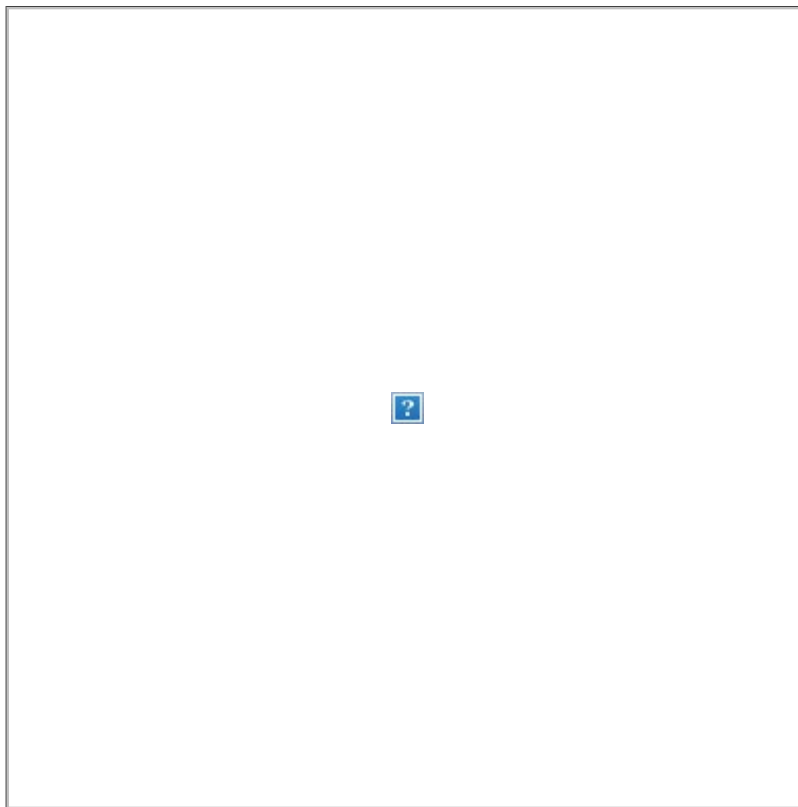
Six deluge guns operated, either on apparatus or on ground. Three aerial streams deployed. Ladder 5 was first, and caught own hydrant. Water pressure problems encountered and two engines boosted pressure. Eight hydrants utilized. Gas leak detected in original structure, and gas company used excavator to expose and close feeder line to entire block.



Lee Wilson photo

Three homes destroyed (one flattened, two gutted), fourth home heavily damaged, and three others damaged. All seven homes declared unsafe to enter. That, the six homes remaining standing. Fifteen adults and five children displaced. No injuries reported, civilian or responder.

Dispatched 7:19 p.m. Controlled 9:42 p.m. Apparatus from Raleigh and New Hope included 12 engines, 3 ladders, 4 rescues, plus 3 engines and 3 ladders for relief and fire watch. Approximately 80 firefighters on scene. Coverage at Raleigh and New Hope stations included Bay Leaf, Falls, Rolesville, and Wake Forest units.



Mike Legeros photo

Investigation started Tuesday morning, with personnel from RFD, Wake County, SBI, and ATF. Scene released by investigators about 1:15 p.m. today. Fire department remaining on scene until Thursday morning. Fire cause to be released Friday.

[Photos posted by Legeros and Lee.](#)

Media

- [News & Observer](#), Tues.
- [News & Observer](#), Weds.
- [NBC17](#), Tues.
- [WRAL](#), Tues.
- [WTVD](#), Tues.

Ladders

- Ladder 2 on Darton Way, behind east end of houses, flowing west. Division C.
- Ladder 5 on Hartham Park Avenue at Armadale Lane, flowing southeast onto west end of houses. Division A/D corner, protecting Division D exposures.
- Ladder 1 on grass overlooking Armadale Lane, flowing south into middle houses. Division A.

Deluge Guns

- Center of block, left side, ground. Division A.
- Center of block, right side, ground, Division A.
- Center of block, Engine 11. Division A.
- Behind houses, ground. Division C.
- Behind houses, ground. Division C.
- West side of block, Engine 27. Division C/D corner.

Hydrants

1. Armadale Lane, west of Leland Drive – Engine 28 with hand lines.
2. Armadale Lane, south of Hartham Park Avenue, east side of circle – Engine 9, feeding Engine 11 on grass overlooking Armadale Lane, with hand lines and deluge gun(s).
3. Armadale Lane, south of Hartham Park Avenue, west side of circle – Ladder 5 with hand lines and flowing.
4. Chilton Place, north Hartham Park Avenue - Engine 25 with hand lines (?) and ground deluge gun.
5. Darton Way at Louisburg Road, north side of circle – New Hope engines, with hand lines and feeding Ladder 2?
6. Leland Drive south of Darton Way – Engine 22, feeding deluge gun(s)? behind houses.
7. Vaxley Hall Drive, east of Casper Creek Lane, laid between buildings down Chilton Place - Ladder 1? Engine 25 feeding Ladder 1?
8. West end of Hartham Park Avenue, in construction area - Engine 27 with hand lines and deluge gun.

Alarms

- First: E28, E19, E22, L5, R1, B1.
- Second: E27, E15, E11, E25, L2, R2, B2, C20, C10, A1. (Includes working fire assignment, not separately dispatched. Integrated into same dispatch.)
- Third: E21, E7, E9, L1, R3, B4, C1, C2.
- Other: HM2, SR2, SR3.
- New Hope: E3, E8, R14, Tanker 10, Brush 7, C1, C3.
- Medical: EMS66, EMS16, EMS5, D3, D6, M92, T1, C200.
- Relief:
 - E10, L7 (1200-0400)
 - E26, L6 (0400-0600)
- Next Day:
 - C20, E9
 - L3 (0800-0900)
 - E13 (0800-1300)
 - E5 (1300-1700)
 - E19 (1700-1900)
- Other Agencies: WC1, Wake EM, Red Cross, RFD explorers.

Coverage:

- E13 to Station 22.
- L4 to Station 11.
- L7 to Station 1.
- Bay Leaf P251 at Station 4.
- Falls P212 at Station 15. (Originally cited as Station 19.)
- Rolesville at New Hope.
- Wake Forest E1 at Station 25.

Corrections and additions welcome!

was the Field Comm not called?

harkey ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 03/24/10 - 22:30

I don't think so Jeff.

lee - 03/25/10 - 00:56

Excellent discription of the events! Sounds like good decisions were made by the 1st in officer on where to make their stand and they were able to hold it. Its also pretty cool to see a ladder truck finally being beached in these parts.

Mike - 03/25/10 - 09:55

Great play by play. It fills in some holes. Couldn't see much with that much smoke.

Dop - 03/25/10 - 12:15

@ Mike; "Ladder being beached", referring to being on the grass?

Heard some of the radio traffic; original size-up was awesome, cool and calm. Battalion Chief showed great command presence, and the plan to go to "BIG WATER" was put in place very quickly and efficiently. I mean, these guys really defined "cool".

I was at the "big one" off Capital Blvd. a few years back, and looking at the pics from the other night, I'd say many lessons learned from a few years ago were implemented at this one, and early on at that.

Superb job A-platoon!!

Silver - 03/25/10 - 19:40

Few more details.

Command was located on the east side of the grassy hill overlooking the burning block.

Medical monitoring and rehab was located at the south corner of Hartham Park Avenue and Leland Drive.

Additional hazard was exploding (?) propane cylinders, some ten or abouts were stored in one of the central involved structures.

Police closed one lane of Highway 401 at the fire scene for a period of time. Smoke from the scene was visible for many miles.

Legeros - 03/25/10 - 20:12

Yeah Jeff I was referring to the ladder being set up off of the pavement, like a lot of depts do when trying to get to the C side of a building. Well I said lots of depts just not many around here. We are lucky that we can get to all sides of our apts most times, but I do think a lot of people worry that they will bury a truck or mess it up trying to get to the C side of garden apts or other buildings. Jeff have you all on Ladder 1 predetermined any buildings where you might have to do this being that Ladder 1 is the smaller of the ladders?

Mike - 03/26/10 - 09:41

Gotcha Mike. We haven't really gone out and looked at apartment complexes or buildings from a flow standpoint, but we do know those that we have general accessibility issues when it comes to having to hump ground ladders, buildings on steep grades, and places where we'd have

to hustle a little more to get it done. I think it's more of a mindset change, where it's just not common to put a truck on the grass. I've always heard the reasoning of "what if there's a septic tank and the ground caves in", or "you never know what's under that grass". Both statements are true, but sometimes you just have to step out there and do it.

What it comes down to is training and getting out in your territory. Go out after a rainy day and see how spongy the ground is around your target hazards, and make mental notes of it. Just pray you don't get transferred for a little bit, because then those "notes" are gone.

Silver - 03/26/10 - 12:13

The Raleigh Fire Department this afternoon released the results of their investigation. The cause has been ruled as undetermined. Based on witness interviews and scene examination, it's been determined the fire originated as a grass fire in the southwest area of the property lot of 2806 Armadale Lane. Three factors helped spread the fire: dry grass, landscape materials next to structures, and high winds.

Legeros - 03/26/10 - 16:38

"The cause has been ruled as undermined"
Shouldn't that be "undetermined" ?

Paul - 03/26/10 - 20:54

Ha! Yes, Paul, corrected. Thanks for catching.

Jeff, Field Comm 1 is in the shop, and perhaps has been since before the fire?

Legeros - 03/27/10 - 12:44

Mike, in terms of Ladder 1 being set up off pavement, in the 9+ years I have been on this physical truck, we have set it up off road twice before, at least on C-shift...once for an Asphalt Hopper Fire, and the other for a woods fire at Lake Lynn Park (when it was serving as E-23). We also put it in someones driveway, as seen in the Legeros pictures on the Dry Well Ln. fire. There is some concern about the weight and sinkage, but as my esteemed colleague Silver points out... you never know what is out there, so lets step out and check as we go. If its safe and feasible, I see o problem taking the rig out there.

Meier - 03/27/10 - 16:23

Hi, I would like to use the first photo in a case study of some meteorological connections with this event on the National Weather Service Raleigh event summary web site (www.erh.noaa.gov/rah/events). If I give credit to the Raleigh/Wake Firefighting Blog and Lee Wilson, is it ok?

Thanks, Jonathan

Jonathan Blaes ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 03/27/10 - 18:56

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'?

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