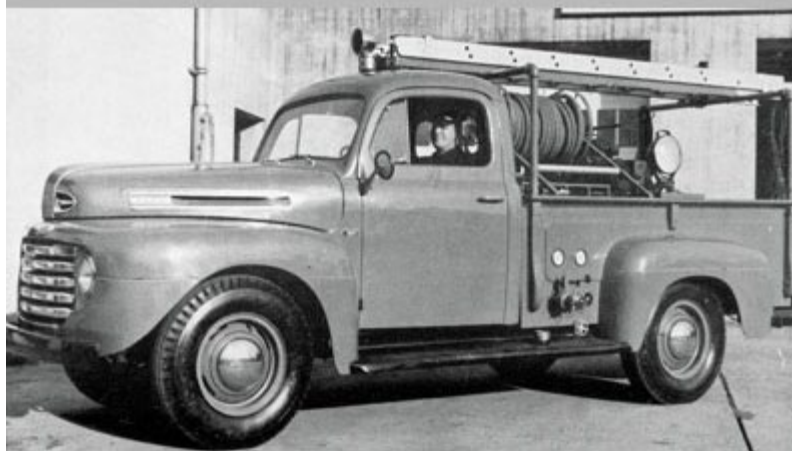


Wilmington Auxiliary Truck

01/19/11 151 W, 1 I - + 5 - 3

Add Wilmington to the list of North Carolina city fire departments that operated auxiliary trucks in the Forties and later. The top photo, from a photocopy, appears in *Wilmington Fire Department 1897-1985*. No other information provided. The middle photo is Raleigh's [1944 Ford](#) "squad truck," which replaced a [1944 Dodge](#) destroyed in an accident the year before. The unit was still in service past 1963.

The bottom photo is Durham's [1941 Ford](#), later Garner's and still later Harrells' first fire engine in Sampson County. Greensboro also operated an auxiliary truck, reported a 1951 fire protection report. It was an International truck with a 350-gallon front-mount pump. It was also equipped with a 1,250-watt generator and floodlight, a foam generator with 200 pounds of powder, a foam aspirator with five gallons of liquid, and other "minor equipment." Haven't found a picture of that one.



The WFD unit is late forties or very early fifties.

DJ - 01/19/11 - 23:48

Yes that top picture is a Chevy between 49-52

Chad - 01/20/11 - 08:23

Ok after looking at it some more, it a 49 or 50. It can't be older than 49 because that's the year they changed to the 2 row hood side emblem. It can't be newer than 1950 because that was the last year to have single door glass and the drivers side vent just in front of the door. The only difference between those 2 years are interior details.

Chad - 01/20/11 - 08:29

Durham's auxiliary truck was placed in service in 1940. From DFD historical information: "This truck was called an Auxiliary (Rescue) Truck. It was equipped with an electric siren, ladders, fire extinguishers, axes, hooks and other tools.

"It also had a 500-watt light to illuminate the scene at night. There were two firefighters assigned to this unit.

"The first day the unit was in service, a fire on Elizabeth St. broke out in an occupied residence. Five people were rescued due to the quick actions of the Auxiliary (Rescue) Truck members."

Durham's 1941 Ford was removed from service by 1952, when it was sold to Garner FD. By then, had it been replaced by a newer unit? Or even a bonafide rescue squad? I suspect there was probably a gap, though it might be tempting to conclude that the auxiliary truck was the department's first "rescue truck." Our friends in Durham can perhaps confirm, deny, or also speculate.

Wilmington's squad was removed from the roster by 1955, confirms both Sanborn Maps and a fire protection report excerpt.

Raleigh's squad, as noted, remained a staffed company into the 1960s.

How did the auxiliary truck concept develop? It might have been a response to reduced manpower levels during World War II. With only two firefighters (versus four or five), you had another unit available for response and even fire suppression.

More later, as known.

Legeros - 01/20/11 - 08:58

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To prevent spam we require you to answer this silly question

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