

## Today's Brush Fires / Wakefield Brush Fire

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How big brush fires happened around here today? The tac channels and patched channels were a-buzz this afternoon. Morrisville, Falls, Hopkins. For starters. Reports were also coming from Durham, with a woods fire at the Duke Homstead historic site. Below is a photo from the Wakefield Plantation Golf Course fire, which was reported about 3:30 p.m. Those wind-fed flames spread quickly and threatened structures on three sides.

Falls, Raleigh, Wake Forest, Stony Hill, Bay Leaf, and Durham Highway were among the departments on scene. That included a major working fire assignment from the city. [WRAL reported](#) about 25 acres burned, with the fire controlled about 5:00 p.m. [Legeros has posted](#) some preliminary (though late-arriving) photos. Lee Wilson was also on scene. Watch for his later.



Sunday update, with units:

- Falls - P212, pumper, brush, tanker 217, C2, C1 (incident command)
- Raleigh - E25 (initial dispatch), ~~E22~~, E15, E28, E4, E18, E27, E9, L5 (staffed by E22), L2, L2, R1, R3, R2, B4, B1, C10, C21, A1, C5
- Bay Leaf - P258, P122, brush
- Wake Forest - E3, two brush units, C5, C1
- Stony Hill - E261, tanker 268, brush 263
- Durham Highway - Brush
- Forestry - Two units plus plow
- Medical - EMS 4, EMS 6, EMS 10, EMS 68, D3, T1
- Coverage - Fuquay-Varina E2 to Falls, Cary E70 (T7 crew on spare engine) to Raleigh Station 10, Raleigh E13 to Station 15, others?

Monday update:

- See [Lee Wilson's photos](#)
- See [Mike Legeros' photos](#)

Let's see if we can list the units at Wakefield...

Falls

P212, pumper, brush, C2, C1 (incident command)

Raleigh

E25 (initial dispatch), E22, E15, E4, E18, E27, E9, L5, L2, R1, R3, B4, C10, C21, A1, C5

Bay Leaf

P258, P122, brush

Wake Forest

E3, C5, C1, brush

Stony Hill

E261, tanker

Durham Highway

Brush

Forestry

Two units plus plow

Medical

EMS 4, EMS 6, EMS 10, EMS 68, D3, T1

Who's missing?

For extra credit, can you identify which units were where??

**Legeros** - 02/20/11 - 00:44

Smithfield had a brush fire near 95 that burned 500 acres this afternoon. and a small woods fire behind an apartment building around 6pm right around the corner from me.

**charlie** - 02/20/11 - 00:57

Kinda surprise Raleigh Didn't send one of its three mini pumpers to that call at wakefield.

**charlie** - 02/20/11 - 00:58

Fuquay Engine 2 move up to Falls Fire Dept.

**DM** - 02/20/11 - 01:41

Raleigh Ladder 1, Rescue 2 and Engine 28 were also there. Wake Forest had two brush trucks and Stony Hill also had a brush truck there. And there was also more than one Raleigh Batt Chief there. Just don't know which ones.

**Marcus** - 02/20/11 - 01:53

Falls tanker 217

**horse** - 02/20/11 - 02:09

Heard Cary E7 (!) was covering at Raleigh Station 10 (!! ) yesterday.

**Legeros** - 02/20/11 - 09:34

yes, Cary E-70 (T-7's crew on a spare engine) and BC-2 went to RFD #10

Also heard a request for a Fuquay Engine (5 i think) to move to 401 and 10-10 for standby.

RFD E13 —> RFD15

**shevais** - 02/20/11 - 10:07

I have a question for anyone who works in Raleigh. After looking through Mike's pictures of the Wakefield fire I saw quite a few pictures of Raleigh FF's wearing air packs. Why is this done on a woods fire?

**Watson** - 02/20/11 - 10:34

The SCBAs were worn because there was smoke.....,and a lot of it.

**A.C. Rich** - 02/20/11 - 12:55

SH Brush 263 and the tanker was SH 268. RFD Bat-1 was the other BC. ...and yes, as my luck would have it, Ladder 5A's crew was at KTC in training (drove the F550 – SR-3) with E22 staffing the Ladder.

**A.C. Rich** - 02/20/11 - 13:00

Questions for anyone that was there or working (A.C.); I saw that the watering system was activated on the golf course, which in my opinion was a great example of using ALL AVAILABLE resources to your advantage!!

- Did it prove to be helpful? – Did they activate the system (if there was one) around the exposure buildings to assist as well? – How were communications and accountability through the incident? With as many agencies involved, I would have hated to been in the Accountability Officers shoes!

Thanks! Awesome job at multiple agencies working together...

**Silver** - 02/20/11 - 13:41

Well thank you for your answer A.C, however with not being familiar with RFD's way of operating is it a city wide way of doing things or personal preference? Its just something that I have never seen/heard of before.

**Watson** - 02/20/11 - 13:50

Watson, I believe the presence of SCBAs has mostly to do with (or is exclusively due to) the threatened buildings, and preparations for possible structural firefighting.

**Legeros** - 02/20/11 - 13:58

@Watson; Mike is correct, and so is A.C., but also, sometimes you have to have some personal accountability and make a call for yourself. This incident wasn't your regular, run of the mill woods fire. The members were working long shifts, away from apparatus. Picture this; you could be working and next thing you know, Mother Nature decides to shift the wind and now you're downwind and getting choked out. Now it's time to mask up!

Sometimes "da' Boss" makes a call and says "boys, we may need SCOTT's on this one", so you do it. But, if we pull up to a woods fire and I make a judgement call for myself, and rather have it and not need it (versus the opposite), my Boss won't say a word about it.

Now, the flip side; if we pull up and I come off wearing pants and a helmet, you can bet there will be a little chat (and deservedly so).

**Silver** - 02/20/11 - 14:22

since all the rescue trucks for raleigh were tied up on the woods fire, what would have happened if a rescue unit was needed else where in the city. would they have sent a ladder company with tools, or would they have called the county for a rescue truck.

**crs** - 02/20/11 - 15:06

@ Jeff: I was the incident commander for about the first 40 minutes. This is probably the most hectic call that I have ever been too. It was pure chaos. The fire spread was way too fast for the first two units that were on scene first. Luckily someone had the thought to call for a brush truck from Stony Hill and Wake Forest as they were arriving, or just before they arrived, on scene. People were on the radio constantly and it was hard to get a word in. Now, people were on the radio because they needed resources at their location and they were trying to relay that they had fire coming towards houses and needed more help quickly. Also, I requested a full assignment from Raleigh as soon as I arrived on scene. When a majority of the second alarm units started arriving, I just told them which side of the fire to go to. The bad thing about the plethora of radio traffic is that I had no idea who I had coming to me until they arrived on scene. This made it even a little more chaotic. However, after some more chiefs got there, we were able to get a good accountability going, got a good staging area, and broke the incident down into an area type command. (Chief Rich, correct me if I am wrong on my wording in here) Each area had their own operating tac channel with command being on a single command channel. There were other officers at the command post monitoring each of those separate tac channels as well. After each division had their own operating tac channel, they were pretty much self sufficient. If they needed anything, that

division supervisor switched over to the command tac channel and requested it.

Also, RWECC played a big role in getting us apparatus. At some point, they sent us a major working fire assignment and also pulled county apparatus as not to deplete the entire city of Raleigh. That was an extremely big help in my opinion. All in all, I think everyone there did a hell of a job and a whole lot of houses were saved due to hard work and going ahead and getting apparatus on the way. This could have been a lot worse, and thankfully it was not. If you have any other questions Jeff, just let me know.

**Marcus** - 02/20/11 - 15:12

@Marcus, thanks for the run down!

**Silver** - 02/20/11 - 16:56

Marcus is being humble :)

I sent this tweet out yesterday:

"Kudos to Raleigh FD & Northern Wake FDs on seamlessly working together on this large brush fire. Awesome display of teamwork & coordination."

Even with the scene being chaotic everyone on scene worked together and turned a tough situation into a model example of IC and Command structure.

I am so proud to call myself a resident of Raleigh & Wake County with the Public Safety folks we have around.

**Marshall Sherard KE4ZNR** ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 02/20/11 - 17:26

Indeed Marshall! As I recently told an esteemed colleague, there's no quarterbacking when you need help... and the names on the fire trucks seem to magically disappear. So, when it's really rough, you are glad to see some red trucks with people who are ready to work!

**A.C. Rich** - 02/20/11 - 18:02

Watson. I must apologize... I thought you were joking, but you were serious. I believe Silver has answered your question. Raleigh's respiratory policy states SCBA must be worn when an IDLH may be encountered (parallels the OSHA standard).

**A.C. Rich** - 02/20/11 - 18:09

Prince Georges County, Maryland, was among the Metro DC locales hit with high winds and large fires yesterday, and the comments on this blog posting echo our observations about SCBA at brush fires: <http://statter911.com/2011/02/19/high-wi..>

**Legeros** - 02/20/11 - 18:14

Long video story from WTVD on Wakefield and other fires yesterday, <http://abclocal.go.com/wtvd/story?sectio...> Look at those high flames in Warren County yesterday!

**Legeros** - 02/20/11 - 18:50

These type of incidents are increasing in frequency. Without all that mutual aid there would have been numerous houses and structures lost. Get over the name on the door and call for help. Good job to all!

**ncff** - 02/20/11 - 19:56

I think this fire was a perfect example of why departments such as Falls should not be closed down, which correct me if I'm wrong, has been on the table lately. Their unit was first on scene and had it been them by themselves or 25 by themselves until they could get units from Raleigh, Wake Forest, and Stony Hill then this would have been ALOT worse. These volunteer departments are doing a strong job, in my opinion these guys need to stay open NOT get closed down.

**eyes and ears** - 02/21/11 - 15:07

Early in the incident it sounded like one of the brush trucks was about to be overrun by fire. Was there any damage to the unit

**Rob Mitchell** - 02/21/11 - 19:16

@crs; Good question. I believe there's a committee in place addressing everything under the sun when it comes to communications and dispatching for the RFD. I think they are addressing things such as this, and hopefully when they roll out with their training in June we will know!!

In other larger cities, usually a Rescue Company would go on the first alarm (or working fire assignment) but that would be it unless "special called", and for the exact reason you stated (tying up the entire heavy rescue complement).

**Silver** - 02/21/11 - 22:48

Rob, it was the brush truck from Falls. The wind shifted directions, burnt a hole in the hose and cut off a member from the truck. Fortunately, the truck and the personnel were able to retreat and re-locate.

**Marcus** - 02/22/11 - 08:04

911 calls released from this incident, <http://dig.abclocal.go.com/wtvd/docs/wak..>

**Legeros** - 02/23/11 - 20:40

Name: (real name preferred)

E-mail: (optional)

Web Site: (optional)

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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'?**

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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 <b> and <i> will be removed from your comment. You can make links by just typing the url or mail-address.