



Raleigh Fire Department Newsletter



Volume 5, Issue 4

Summer 2011

New Radio Procedures Start

On June 15, the Raleigh Fire Department adopted new procedures for fireground radio operations. The changes include new call signs for each company position, the adoption of a six-point size-up, and the elimination of the phrase "major working fire" as part of the size-up.

"Why are we making changes?" asks Division Chief Peter Brock, and chair of the project committee. "The current procedures are outdated, and don't reflect how our engine, ladder, and rescue companies are currently operating on scene."



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Two Alarms on Avent Ferry



On July 19, two alarms were struck at 3108 Avent Ferry Road. Reported as a smoke investigation, Engine 20 arrived at a connected series of three 5,000 square-foot apartment buildings, with fire and smoke already venting through the roof of the first building.

A second alarm was requested on arrival, and crews entered the structure with two-inch lines. Fire was found in a common attic through the three buildings, and was attacked from both ends: Ladder 7 using an overhead master stream, and an interior crew with hand lines.

Two additional engines were requested, including Engine 8, which deployed their new portable personal monitor outside.

Dispatched at 5:23 p.m., it was marked under control at 6:45 p.m. Twelve units were damaged, and 36 people were displaced.



Firefighters rescued several pets, including the cat shown receiving oxygen treatment. One firefighter received a minor back injury, and several were treated for heat exhaustion. The air temperature was 103 degrees.

The cause was determined as accidental, from air conditioning unit electrical box in the rear of the structure. See more photos at www.raleighfirenews.org. ■



Requesting a Second Alarm

For decades, arriving units have used codes or phrases to describe heavy fire conditions that also required dispatch of a second alarm. “Code 3” was used from 1988 to 2004, followed by “Major Working Fire” since 2004. That phrase was discontinued effective June 15, 2011.

“Second alarms are now requested as second alarms,” says Brock. “The arriving unit’s size-up will communicate the amount of fire.” The elimination of “major working fire” has additional benefits, he adds.

Using alarm levels makes the department compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) used by fire departments across the country. It also allows for alarm levels beyond two.

“The ‘major working fire’ designation was only programmed for two alarm levels,” Brock notes. “This was a holdover from when the city was much smaller.”

Alarm levels are requested in sequence, so third alarms must be requested after second alarms.

Additional alarms should be requested by fireground commanders if they have the potential to use all their resources quickly, if they need extra help for evacuation, if fire growth is outpacing efforts to control, or if firefighter safety is at risk with current resources.

“You can always return to service the units that you don’t need,” Brock says.

Six-Point Size-Up

The new radio procedures also include a more formal process for the first unit’s sizing up (or size-up) of a fire.

Six tasks are performed by the new size-up guidelines:

- Establish and identify command.
- State incident address and location.
- Describe the incident and building type.
- Describe the structure and size.
- Describe conditions.
- Assign resources as necessary.

Here’s an example of a six-point size-up: “Engine 1 is on scene at 13 East Street. Engine 1 Officer will be command in Division A [building front]. This will be a working fire. Dispatch a second alarm.

This is a two story masonry commercial/residential structure approximately 40 by 40 feet. The fire is in Division 2 [second floor] showing from Divisions A and D [right corner].

Engine 1 is laying in wet from the intersection of East and New Bern.”

New Call Signs

Each firefighter is assigned their own radio, and new call signs have also been assigned as part of the new procedures. These plain text descriptions replace the numeric codes.

Old Call Signs	New Call Signs
Engine __ - 01 (Captain)	Engine __ - Officer
Engine __ - 02 (Lieut.)	Engine __ - Driver
Engine __ - 03 (FF)	Engine __ - Nozzle
Engine __ - 04 (FF)	Engine __ - Irons
Ladder __ - 06 (Captain)	Ladder __ - Officer
Ladder __ - 07 (Lieut.)	Ladder __ - Driver
Ladder __ - 08 (FF)	Ladder __ - Irons
Ladder __ - 09 (FF)	Ladder __ - Outside Vent
Rescue __ - 11 (Lieut.)	Rescue __ - Officer
Rescue __ - 12 (FF)	Rescue __ - Irons

If a fifth firefighter has been assigned to a ladder company, their designation is Ladder __ - Hook. ■

Radio watch was established at all fire stations on February 7, 1957. Watch hours were 0800 to 2300.

Emergency Fire Dispatch

In addition to the fire department's new radio procedures, new dispatching protocols were placed in service by the Raleigh/Wake County Emergency Communication Center (ECC) on June 8.



The new system is called Emergency Fire Dispatch (EFD) and applies to non-medical incidents in both the city and county. It's a version of Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD), which has been used for medical calls in Raleigh and Wake County for over a decade.

Call takers at the communications center now ask more questions and more targeted questions. The calls are then classified with a wider and more accurate range of call types. The new call types include:

- Residential structure fire.
- Multiple residential structure fire.
- Commercial structure fire.
- Elevator rescue.
- Wildland fire.

In addition to the call type, an alphanumeric code (or determinant) is included with the dispatch. This is both broadcast on the radio, and included with printed and computer-based call information.

Examples:

67-D-1	Wildland fire
67-D-2	Brush/grass fire
67-D-3	Large outside fire
67-D-4	Large outside fire with hazardous materials
67-B-1	Small outside fire
67-B-2	Small outside fire with hazardous materials present
67-B-3	Unknown situation (investigation)
67-A-1	Transformer (wire or pole)
67-A-2	Extinguished fire
67-O-1	Controlled burn

The new system also allows for more accurate dispatch and response priorities.

For example, a reported apartment fire that the caller believed to be extinguished was previously dispatched

as a "structure fire" or "apartment fire."

This type of call is now dispatched as "Extinguished Structure Fire," which helps responding units better understand the situation they may encounter.

The Raleigh Fire Department has not made any changes to the assignment of units to the new call types.

Future plans will include assessing all new call types, and reducing or increasing the number of responding units as necessary. ■

Office Upgrade for Division Chief



In March, personnel at Station 8 remodeled and painted the Division Chief's office, located in the basement. Modifications included removing two of three desks, adding a half-partition, wall-mounting two flat panel television monitors, and installing new carpeting.

"The renovations allow the office to also be used as a command post," says Division Chief Garry Spain. "With the two monitors, we can simultaneously watch weather reports and see unit status on a CAD display."

The wall-mounted monitors can also be used for meetings and distance-learning education, notes Spain.

The basement of Station 8 was first renovated in 2004, after Services moved to their facility on New Bern Avenue. It houses the offices and living quarters of Battalion 3 and Car 10, the Division Chief. ❖

Rotation of Command

Effective June 1, the following transfer of command was executed:

Asst. Chief Rusty Styons from Prevention to Operations.

Asst. Chief Frank Warner from Operations to Prevention.

New Decon Trailer Delivered



The Raleigh Fire Department has placed a new decontamination trailer in service. Built by Matthews Specialty Vehicles, the 32-foot trailer is used to decontaminate responders at haz-mat incidents.

The walk-through trailer has two lanes for undressing, washing, rinsing, and redressing. It was purchased with Department of Homeland Security grant monies and replaced a tractor-drawn box truck that carried manually-configured decontamination equipment.

The new trailer reduces the number of people required to set up and operate, says Haz-Mat Coordinator Capt. Ian Toms.

"We now only post a couple of haz-mat responders and use engine company personnel to assist with set-up," says Toms. "That leaves more haz-mat personnel available for mitigation activities."

The unit is completely self-contained except for a water source. Tank-less heaters temper the water and a dosing unit allows the injection of a cleaning solution if required. It can be set up in ten minutes.

The trailer is housed at Station 22 and is operated by Ladder 5 personnel. The unit is numbered SR 3. ❖

Orientation for Fire Inspectors



The Raleigh Fire Department and Wake County Fire Services have worked together to create an orientation for fire inspections personnel with limited fire service experience. Called *Introduction to Firefighting*, the 32-hour course was conducted over four days in June.

The participants totaled eleven, with nine from the Raleigh Fire Marshal's Office, and two from the Wake County Fire Marshal's Office. The four-day, 32-hour course included three days of classroom instruction at the Keeter Training Center.

The fourth day consisted of live-fire training exercises at the Wake County Fire Training Center. The drills included outdoor evolutions using LP gas props, and interior evolutions using LP gas props inside the burn building.

Course instruction included personal protective equipment (PPE), self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), incident command, accountability, fireground procedures, fire behavior, hand line operations, and general polices and procedures."

"Most importantly, we taught them about team work," says Fire Investigator Lt. Adam Stanley, "both on the fireground and within the organization."

One of the missions of the Fire Marshal's Office, Stanley notes, is preventing line of duty deaths. "We're all on the same team," he notes, "even if we're in different offices and with different duties." ❖

Tornado Strikes Raleigh



Please see the April 2011 special edition of the Raleigh Fire Department newsletter for coverage of the April 16 tornado. That special edition is available on the newsletter web site, www.raleighfirenews.org. ■

Budget Adopted

The approved FY12 budget marks the third consecutive year of significant budgetary reductions and operations under constrained resources.

Budget changes for the fire department include delayed replacement of two engines with high repair costs and excessive mileage. This is the third year for delayed replacement.

Also delayed is the upgrade and replacement of hydraulic rescue tools. Uniform replacement in all divisions has also been limited to emergency replacement only.

The next training academy start date was delayed until January, with a hire date for recruits in late December. Requested supplemental expenses for operational costs associated with Fire Station 29 were not approved, however. That facility is planned for the 12000 block of Leesville Road.

The Capital Improvement Program includes FY12 funding for approximately \$200K per facility for fire station improvements and roof repairs, as well as \$75K for preliminary design work associated with relocating Fire Station 12. That facility is planned for the 4300 block of Poole Road. Read budget documents at raleighfirenews.org. ❖

More Solar Systems Installed



On Dec. 1, 2009 the city was awarded a \$150,000 Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant from the Department of Energy as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

This funding has allowed for the design and installation of solar thermal water heating systems at Fire Stations 1, 6, 16 (shown above), and 17. It has also helped fund lighting upgrades at the stations.

The installation of the solar systems was completed in June, while the lighting upgrades are ongoing.

Preliminary estimates expect a savings of 30-50% of the natural gas used to heat the water at the fire stations. ❖

Charity Events



The fifth annual **National Fallen Firefighters Golf Tournament** on June 14 brought 31 teams and 124 players to Eagle Ridge Golf Club in Raleigh. Hosted by the Raleigh Fire Department and supported by over 30 sponsors, the event raised \$8,500 for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. Safety Officer Capt. Sammy McIntyre, who played on the Championship Flight winning team, is shown taking a swing.



Fire department personnel, with spouses and family members, participated in the **Dance Like No One is Watching Gala** on May 27. The charity event for teens and young adults with life-altering illnesses or disabilities was held at the North Raleigh Hilton. Event supporters included the Raleigh Professional Firefighters Association. Entertainment included the band Nash Vegas, fronted by Capt. Damon Chapel (E16-C), shown above. ■

RALEIGH FIRE MUSEUM OPENS



On Tuesday, June 14, the grand opening of the Raleigh Fire Department Museum was held at the Keeter Training Center. Located in a classroom trailer, the museum collects artifacts and images representing over 150 years of firefighting in the Capital City.

"This is a small but important step," said Fire Chief John McGrath during the ceremony. "We hope to grow this museum, and eventually make [it] a destination for school children, tourists, and the citizens of Raleigh."

The Raleigh Fire Department Historical Society has led creation of the museum. Over the last several months, they've raised money from personnel, helped build furnishings, and located numerous artifacts both inside and outside the department.

"Donors have included active and retired firefighters," says Battalion Chief Alan Walters. "But we've just scratched the surface. We hope to keep finding more things to add."



The museum will also help raise awareness of the fire department's pending anniversary. Next year is the 100th anniversary of the Raleigh Fire Department as a fully-paid fire department.

"Next year is also the 150th anniversary of when the volunteer Raleigh Fire Department was reorganized," notes historian and former member Mike Legeros.

Some of the items in the museum date to the volunteer

era, such as the handwritten log book of the Rescue Steam Fire Engine Company. They were later renamed the Rescue Hose Company.

On Saturday, July 9, the museum received a visit from the great granddaughter of Fire Chief John Mangum. She was visiting from Texas, during an extended stay in Raleigh with her husband. She was thrilled to see references to her great grandfather.

Museum Schedule

The Raleigh Fire Department Museum is open on the second Saturday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. For more information, to arrange special visits, contact Battalion Chief Alan Walters or Capt. David Barefoot at Fire Station 23.

Please note that the Raleigh Fire Department's collection of antique fire apparatus is housed in a separate location, at Fire Station 28, at 3500 Forestville Road.

Membership Drive and More Information

To help raise money for the museum, as well as other projects, the historical society is planning a membership drive this summer. Other fundraisers are planned including the selling of fire department challenge coins.

Learn more about the Raleigh Fire Department Historical Society at www.raleighfirehistory.org. ❖

BACK IN THE DAY

Vintage snapshots of Fire Station 6 were recently discovered. They were taken by Matt White, who as a youth considered the station his second home. Pictured below are Charles B. Dent (1966-1993), Johnny Watkins (1966-1994), and F. Laurel Blake (1953-1979). See more at www.raleighfirenews.org. ■



Photo Gallery



On June 18, city and county fire departments assisted with a search and recovery operation at Lake Wheeler. Rescue 3 is pictured launching its boat.



Engine 10 was first on scene at a house fire on Slippery Elm Drive on June 14. Two additional engines and a second ladder company assisted at the fire.



The Raleigh Fire Department helped host the events of the North Carolina Fallen Firefighters Memorial weekend. Honor guard members participated in both the memorial service, and the preceding parade on May 7.



Station 28-A Firefighters Chaz Moore and Jonathan Morris, and Capt. Jerome Faulkner feel the burn on May 2.



The fire department's haz-mat team investigated a suspicious substance on a passenger jet at Raleigh-Durham International Airport on April 20.



Engine 11 prepares to attack a car fire on St. Albans Drive on April 17.

See more photos at www.raleighfirenews.org

Raleigh Fire Department
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SOUTH ATLANTIC FIRE RESCUE EXPO
RALEIGH CONVENTION CENTER
AUGUST 10-13

RALEIGH FIRE DEPARTMENT MUSEUM
105 KEETER CENTER DRIVE
SECOND SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH
10:00 A.M. TO 2:00 P.M.
AUG 13, SEP 10, OCT 8

MONTHLY RETIREE BREAKFAST
PAM'S RESTAURANT, 5111 WESTERN BOULEVARD
SECOND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH
7:30 A.M.
AUG 9, SEP 13, OCT 11

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

THE RALEIGH FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER IS A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR PERSONNEL, RETIREES, AND CITIZENS. THE EDITOR IS HISTORIAN MIKE LEGEROS. BACK ISSUES ARE AVAILABLE AT www.raleighfirenews.org. TO LEARN ABOUT THE RALEIGH FIRE DEPARTMENT, VISIT www.raleigh-nc.org/fire.

FIRE PREVENTION CODE REVISED

Part 5, Chapter 2, Article B of the Raleigh City Code was recently revised. Those are the regulations pertaining to fire prevention and protection in the Capital City.

"These changes align our current fire prevention ordinance with the international codes," says Asst. Fire Marshal Jeff Johnson.

Among the changes are a new requirement for key box systems at facilities with hazardous materials and off-site alarm systems.

A new sliding scale of inspection fees based on square-footage has been enacted. It replaces fixed rates for all building sizes.

Also new are operational permits for existing buildings with special contents or features, such as explosives, flammable and combustible liquids, and pyrotechnic special effects materials.

"These changes will help protect our citizens," says Johnson. "But they'll also help protect our firefighters."

Learn more about the code revisions in the next issue of the Raleigh Fire Department Newsletter. ■