

History of Wake County Fire Service Governance (And Other Milestones)

Version 1.2

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Introduction

This informal research document contains historical information compiled in 2014 and 2016.

Before 1900

The Raleigh Fire Department sends men and equipment to neighboring towns as needed (e.g., very rarely), for major fires and in later decades, for such other emergencies such as plane crashes. Before the era of motor apparatus, the fire equipment is transported via railroad.

This continues through the decades, and evolves into the current practice of mutual aid and automatic aid.

Some history: <http://legeros.com/ralwake/raleigh/history/writing/essay-mutual-aid.shtml>

1910s and 1920s – Fire Departments Begin Forming

Towns begin organizing fire departments. They typically pay for equipment¹, which is operated by citizen volunteers. They also create/determine any fire districts.²

In later decades, those volunteers form private corporations, funded by a combination of homeowner subscriptions, town stipends, county stipends, and finally fire taxes.

The creation of “town” departments continues for decades:

- Wendell by early 1910s.³
- Zebulon in 1910s.
- Apex (1927), Cary (1922), Wake Forest (1921)⁴ in 1920s.
- Fuquay-Varina (1938) in 1930s.⁵
- Wake Forest #2 (black community) (1943) in 1940s.
- Garner (1952), Knightdale (1954), Morrisville (1955), Rolesville (1958) in 1950s.
- Holly Springs (1971) in 1970s.
- Source: MJL/WCFD.

1950 to 1959 - More Milestones

1953 – Raleigh FD creates two-piece rescue squad (including transport unit).

- One of two early fire-based rescue services, followed by Cary adding a Civil Defense rescue unit (equipment only, non-transport) in 1955.
- Funeral homes, later private rescue squads, and later Wake County EMS provide the lion’s share of the county’s emergency ambulance service, as the decades pass.
- Select fire departments provide rescue services in the 1960s and 1970s, notably after the introduction of Hurst tools.
- See www.legeros.com/history/ems for research project on Wake County rescue squad and EMS history.

¹ The most effective of this early equipment was the installation of fire hydrants and a supply of hose, either transported on hand-pulled or motor-pulled reels, or on trucks included pick-up trucks or fire engines.

² These were fire district for insurance purposes, and different from the tax-based fire districts recognized in later decades.

³ How should we define the date that a town’s fire department was formed? (a.) First fire equipment purchased? (b.) first company of people who organized to use the equipment, (c.) first words “fire department” used in context of town operations, (d.) first chartered organization to operate? Yes.

⁴ Believe Wake Forest likely had fire equipment prior to 1921.

⁵ Earlier fire departments or at least equipment existed in both Fuquay Springs and Varina, correct?

1953 – First “rural fire department” formed, Zebulon Rural.

- Or, more specifically, first rural fire department created as an adjunct to an existing municipal fire department.
- Sponsored by Zebulon Farm Bureau.

- Community organizations also help sponsor other early rural departments.
 - The Fuquay-Varina Farm Bureau sponsors the Fuquay-Varina Rural Fire Department, organized in 1954.
 - The Junior Order, a men’s organization, sponsors a project started in 1956 that becomes the Wake New Hope Fire Department in 1958.
 - First meeting in October 1956.
 - About eighteen months later, and after “several door-to-door solicitations, two turkey shoots and one barbecue”, the fire department is operational.
 - (RT, 4/10/58)
 - **Did such sponsorships pre-date the Wake County Civil Defense rural firefighting program?**
- Rural departments based in towns typically have good working relationships.
 - Some share personnel and apparatus and facilities, and are separate entities only on paper.
 - Others operated more independently, and house their equipment in different facilities.

1954 – Wake County hires first paid, full-time Civil Defense Director.⁶

- Colonel David Lydall Hardee.
 - Took oath as Raleigh-Wake County Civil Defense Director on February 15, 1954.
 - Highly decorated combat veteran of both world wars. Also Bataan Death March survivor and a three-year captive in the Philippines.
 - Charged with “preparing [for civilian defense] one of the state’s six targets for nuclear attack.”⁷
 - Office first located in basement of county court house.
 - Source: Economics of Emergencies: North Carolina, Civil Defense, and the Cold War, 1940 – 1963, Dissertation by Frank Arthur Blazich, Jr., M.A., Graduate Program in History, The Ohio State University, 2013.
- Served until February 1960.
- Replaced by Colonel John C. Thorne.
- Source: North Carolina Civil Defense history, blog, July 31, 2009.

Other notes:

- Wake County Office of Civil Defense later renamed Civil Preparedness, later renamed Emergency Preparedness, later named Emergency Management.
- Later director in 1970s is Russell Capps.
- Office also later provides monthly stipends to rescue squads, starting (?) in the 1970s.

⁶ Civilian Defense activities in Raleigh/Wake County started as early as World War II. Auxiliary firefighters, air raid wardens, air raid drills in Raleigh.

⁷ One Civil Defense activity involved the Ground Observer Corps, which used a observation post built atop the Apex fire station. Learn more: <http://legeros.com/ralwake/photos/weblog/pivot/entry.php?id=2916>

1955 – Wake County Fireman’s Association formed.

- Early organizational meeting held at Station 1 in Raleigh on October 17, 1955.
 - Bob Heater named Acting President.
 - Gordon Keith named Acting Secretary.
 - Tentative charter and other actions voted upon.
 - Heater had previously met with attorney Robert Emanuel, to determine desired initial actions for the organization.
 - Present are members of Apex (3), Cary (6), Fuquay Varina (1), Garner (4), Morrisville (2), Raleigh (2), and Wake Forest (2) fire departments.
- First meeting of Incorporators held at the Insurance Building in Raleigh on November 23, 1955.
 - Named as incorporators are Robert B. Heater (Cary), C. S. Schaub (Apex), Win Donat (Fuquay Varina), J. B. Keeter (Raleigh), H. M. Jackson (Garner), Willis Winston (Wake Forest), H. C. Sears Jr. (Morrisville).
 - By Laws are adopted.
 - State charter also dated November 23, 1955.
- Officers and board members elected at meeting at Station 1 in Raleigh on January 3, 1956.

1956, by – Rural fire department program created in Wake County, administered by county office of Civil Defense.

- Program helps departments get started.
- Provides money for equipment, for a new radio network, etc.
- Not sure if money is from federal sources, but administered by county.
- To qualify for county aid, departments much meet “State Fire Insurance Rating Bureau standards on organization and equipment” and also agree to assist other county fire departments if they’re needed. (RT, 11/23/64).

1956 - First non-municipally affiliated private department forms, Six Forks (1956). Soon followed by Stony Hill (1958), Wake New Hope (1956), Western Boulevard (1957).

- Who were these volunteers? Six Forks Road members in 1958 included a grocer, barber, detective, telephone man, lawyer, school teacher, florist, mail carrier, heating contractor, two mechanics, a Civil Defense official, and several State workers. Source: MJL/Arcadia.

Rural departments around towns also forming, operate in cohorts with municipal fire departments that already exist: Fuquay-Varina (1954), Wake Forest (1956), Wendell (1957), Zebulon (1953).

- Once a rural fire department was formed, volunteers and community members built the necessary infrastructure.
- They held fundraisers and gave money; elected directors and established by-laws.
- They donated barns and garages for storing trucks; built tin sheds and block buildings as the first firehouses.
- They even constructed their own fire apparatus, typically converting surplus vehicles into homebuilt pumpers and tankers.
 - The Fairview Fire Department was a typical example.
 - Their first fire engine was built from an ex-weapons carrier.

- Members added a water tank and pump, mounted two taillights as warning lights, and applied a coat of donated paint in a chicken shack.
- It was stored in a building whose doors were untied, laid flat, and driven over when they responded to a call.
- Source: MJL/Arcadia.

Towns without fire departments form their first ones, through the help of the rural fire department program: Garner (1952), Knightdale (1954), Morrisville (1955), Rolesville (1958).

Source: MJL/WCFD.

1957

Resolution adopted by Board of Commissions, June 3, 1957, contains a report on “Organizations for Civil Defense” in Raleigh and Wake County. Highlights:

- Progress report for the year 1956 to 1957.
- Rural fire departments have been established in ten locations: Apex, Cary, Garner, Fuquay-Varina, Knightdale, Morrisville, Six Forks, Wake Forest, Wendell, and Zebulon.
- Other fire departments are in the process of organizing, and some are about ready to purchase equipment.
- These departments have 242 volunteer members, and are “rendering the people of the county a service that cannot be estimated in dollars and cents.”
- Summary of calls answered by nine departments:
 - Firefighters have fought 241 fires:
 - 20 – Industrial and business buildings
 - 62 – Dwellings and outhouses
 - 44 – Grass and woods fires
 - 15 – Autos and trucks
 - 65 – Tobacco barns
 - 6 – Other types
 - Property destroyed \$223,010.
 - Value of property saved, that was on fire: \$350,500.
Value of property that would have burned, if preventative measures had not been taken: \$549,200.
 - One life saved.
 - Additionally, a large number of community services performed by the firemen.

1958 – County-wide, two-way radio network installed for rural fire departments, and with assistance and funds from local Civil Defense office. Raleigh Fire Department provides call taking and dispatching services, from console at “Central Fire Station.” Their radio call sign becomes “Central.” (MJL/WCFD)

1960s and 1970s – Departments Created, Relocated, Merged

Private departments continue to form, both in county and around Raleigh and Cary. Most are not associated with a municipality.

- Bay Leaf (1961), Durham Highway (1964), Fairgrounds (1961), Fairview (1963), Swift Creek (1960), Yrac (1961) in 1960s.
- Falls (1970), Holly Springs (1971), Hopkins (1977) in 1970s.

Some departments disband/reform or relocate, as territory is annexed by municipalities.

- Western Boulevard disbands in 1960, and reforms as Fairgrounds in 1961.
- Six Forks relocates farther north on Six Forks Road in 1962.
- Six Forks relocates to Lynn Road in 1974.
- Durham Highway opens Station 2 on Pinecrest Road, 1976.

Some towns (one town?) begin to take control over their private-run/private-contracted fire departments, and turning them into town entities.

- Cary in 1960.

Other towns (own town) merge their rural departments into the municipal fire department.

- Fuquay-Varina in 1972.

Both trends will continue into later decades.

Some departments also move their fire stations into newer, larger facilities:

- Morrisville into permanent building on Morrisville-Carpenter Road, 1960.
- Rolesville to permanent building on Main Street, 1960.
- Wendell into municipal building on Pine Street, 1963.
- Cary from three nearby locations to Academy Street, 1965.⁸
- Yrac from nearby to Durham Road, 1966.
- Bay Leaf from nearby to Norwood Road, 1967.
- Garner to nearby on Main Street, 1970.
- Wake Forest (municipal) to nearby on White Street, 1973.
- Zebulon from town hall to dedicated fire station next door on Vance Street, 1974.
- Fuquay-Varina to nearby on South Fuquay Avenue, 1978.

Other departments expand their facilities:

- Knightdale adds two bays on Hester Street, 1959.
- Morrisville adds two bays and meeting room on Morrisville Carpenter Road, 1963.
- Knightdale adds second story on Hester Street, 1967.
- Fairview adds to their station on Ten Ten Road, 1972.
- Rolesville adds second story on Main Street, 1960s-1970s.

⁸ Expansion of the Cary Fire Department past the 1960s isn't covered in this document, beyond notes about their suburban fire contract started in 2010. Same for other municipal expansion, such as Apex, Fuquay-Varina, and Wake Forest, except where county funding is involved, such as Fuquay-Varina Station 3.

1960s and 1970s – First Substations

Also, a number of “town” departments begin creating “substations”, to provide protection to communities that are a farther distance from the immediate rural fire districts.

- Morrisville FD creates substation in Carpenter in 1975.
- Garner FD creates substation in Panther Branch in 1976.

1960s to 1980s – Tax Districts

Also, tax districts are created for some fire departments. These are approved by voters, through a special election.⁹ Some districts are created at the same time a new department is organized, others are implemented some years (or even decades) later:

- 1960 – Wake New Hope supported by 10-cent fire tax by April 1960.
 - By July 1962, they are the only “entirely volunteer department” in the state that is tax-supported.
 - Receives a special recognition as an “outstanding rural volunteer fire department” by the NFPA in the fall of 1961.
 - (RT, 7/14/62)
 - Rate drops from eight cents to two cents in 1968.
 - Reduction is possible because department’s fire station building and equipment debt has been paid.
 - Only expenses are maintenance and operation of six fire trucks.
 - (RT, 7/4/68)
- 1964 – Six Forks and Wake Forest Rural supported by fire tax by October 1964.
- 1964 – Yrac residents vote for a fire tax in a referendum on December 12, 1964.
 - Registrars set up special books for all residents of district, who are twenty-one years old who own personal or real property.
 - Residents vote on authorizing county to add a fire tax to members of the fire district, up to ten cents per \$100 property valuation.
 - One of three fire tax referendums being held that day. Also being held in Rolesville and Stony Hill.
 - At Stony Hill, only about 100 of 500 property owners participate in membership program.
 - Since department was formed, membership numbers have steadily fallen.
 - Annual fee of \$10 reduced to \$5 to increase participation.
 - Department seeking tax district to “help spread the burden of financing fire protection for the district.” Currently, only about “half the eligible members are participating in the contribution system.”
 - Specially, about 300 of 800 property owners are paying \$10 yearly membership fee.
 - Only fundraising are resident contributions, and the annual Fireman’s Day celebration.
 - Department has twenty-four volunteers and three trucks. It’s operating from a rented building and is seeking land for a permanent fire station.
 - Other than Six Forks, Wake Forest Rural, and Wake New Hope, all other rural fire departments in county are supported by contributions.
 - (RT, 11/25/64, N&O, 12/5/64)

⁹ Did any districts hold elections that failed at first? Where residents declined to adopt a tax, until a future year/decade?

- 1965 – Tax-support fire district approved for Durham Highway FD.
- 1967 – Special fire tax established within Bay Leaf Fire District.
 - Fire department no longer operates using membership fees.
 - Department also receives monthly stipend from county.
 - In 1961, the county commissioners voted to provide \$100 per month to support the department.
 - The membership fees in 1961 were established as \$10.00 per household.
- 1967 – By July 8, 1967, these departments have tax districts:
 - Bay Leaf
 - Durham Highway
 - Rolesville
 - Six Forks
 - Stony Hill
 - Wake-New Hope
 - Wake Forest Rural
 - Yrac
 - (N&O 7/8/67)
- 1971 – Swift Creek begins being supported by tax base of community residents.
 - Five cents from every one hundred dollars within district is budgeted from county to fire department.
- 1971 – Knightdale begins accepting tax support from county.
- 1988 - Garner Fire Department begins accepting tax money from Wake County.

1960 to 1969 - More Milestones

1960

- City annexes five “residential fringe areas,” which impacts the rural fire districts of Six Forks, Wake New Hope, and Western Boulevard fire departments.
 - Western Boulevard lost 500 of 700 subscribers.¹⁰
 - Effort planned to move the department outside the city limits, and add enough territory to their district to “make it worthwhile to operate.”
 - Cost isn’t initially known, and it’s just one of “many problems that will have to be worked out.”
 - None of the expenses will be borne by the city.
 - Wake New Hope lost part of their district.
 - Department has special 10-cent tax levy, in its district.
 - Facing lost revenues, department will have to “rework its budget and pare it to fit remaining revenue sources, or get more subscriptions to take up the slack.”
 - District “wasn’t hit too hard” by the annexation.
 - Six Forks lost a “good slice” of its district.

¹⁰ There was at least one legal challenge to Raleigh’s annexation, as the News & Observer on February 1, 1961, reported that Western Boulevard directors were awaiting word from the State Supreme Court before deciding on disbanding. On January 20, “word came from the court that the March 31, 1960, annexation was constitutional.”

- Wake County Commissioners name special committee on July 21, 1960, to “cope with the problems created.”
- Rural Fire Districts Board created, with Commissioner J. Dewey Powell as chairman. Members are Wake County Fireman’s Association President Clifton Couick, Apex Rural FD member Carter Schuab, Western Boulevard FD member Dr. I. O. Schaub, Six Forks FD member William T. Howell, Wake New Hope FD member J. A. Thebault, and Wake County Civil Defense Director David L. Hardee, who is also secretary of the Wake County Rural Fire Districts Commission.
- Duties of the new board are to assist Six Forks and Western Boulevard fire departments in matters “pertaining to their dissolution, reorganization, or removal to adjacent localities.”
- The board will “also help make an inventory of property of these fire departments, determine their costs and market value and assist in the reallocation of government surplus property, the disposition of government matching funds or property and equipment purchased with such funds.”
 - Most government surplus property amounts to radio equipment, provided through the Civil Defense program.
 - That equipment would have to be transferred to another fire department, or returned to the government, if a department dissolved.
- The board will also recommend to the commissioners when “county aid is to be discontinued or on what rate and basis such county aid is to be made.”
- City has contracted with Western Boulevard and Six Forks, to “rent their facilities until such time as new city fire departments can be built in those areas.”
 - True? Station 8 opened the morning of the annexation, with the second engine from Station 1 relocated to rented house on Method Road.
 - Was Six Forks FD perhaps contracted to continue coverage, until Station 9 was built in 1963? Don’t believe that engine was placed in service ahead of the city facility completed.
- Source: News & Observer, July 22, 1960

1963 – Wake County Fire Chiefs Council created.

- Officers named at organizational meeting on Friday before March 11, 1963.
 - Ed Rosenberger (Wake New Hope) – Chairman.
 - Stan Mizelle (Swift Creek) - Vice Chairman.
 - John Harris (Six Forks) - Secretary.
- Group’s objective is “to provide mutual aid whereby volunteer fire companies in the county will assist each other in providing protection.”
 - When “all of the equipment of one company is at the scene of a fire and a second alarm comes in for the same district, the firefighter equipment from the neighboring station would be dispatched to the second fire.”
- Also plans to “establish a central training ground for the use of all county and city companies.”
- And plans to meet periodically through the year on a regular basis.
- Source: News & Observer, March 11, 1963.

1964 – Countywide fire department to be studied.

- Suggested by county Tax Supervisor J. M. Brothers to county commissioners at meeting on Monday before October 6, 1964.

- Study is suggested, after two petitions were received, calling for an election to “authorize levy of special taxes to support rural fire departments.”
- Acting on an early petition, the commissioners authorized a special election to be held December 12 in the Stony Hill district.
- Three fire departments (Six Forks, Wake New Hope, and Wake Forest Rural) currently have special tax levies that won’t exceed ten cents per \$100 of property value.
- Three more departments (Cary Rural, Rolesville, Stony Hill) are seeking the special levy.
- Brothers says the special tax districts are “creating problems” for the county tax department, such as “locating personal property owners within the districts.”
- With nearly half of the seventeen rural fire departments to have tax levies (if the additional three are approved), Brothers thinks that a county-wide fire department should be studied.
 - Notes the county Civil Defense Director Col. John Thorne, the seventeen rural fire departments cover 70 to 80 percent of the county.
 - Since a rural fire district cannot exceed four miles from the fire station “to get reduced insurance rates,” a county wide levy would “require fire [stations] throughout the county.”
- Departments without tax levies are supported by “contributions and fundraising campaigns by the firemen and members of the community.”
- Source: News & Observer, October 6, 1964.

1967

July 8, 1967 – *News & Observer* reports on “Rural Fire Units Have Financial Struggle”. Highlights:

- More than 500 men are volunteer firemen in county.
- Estimated \$500,000 worth of equipment, owned by all departments.
- Eighteen rural fire departments answer almost 1,000 calls a year.
- They have about seventy “firefighting vehicles” and each has at least one “radio unit.”
- They sometimes spend as much as twenty hours a week “answering alarms and maintaining equipment.”
- Plus more hours for “money making schemes to pay for the services which they perform for the public at no charge.”
- Their departments have “sponsored everything from gospel ‘sings’ to antique sales.”
- “Barbecue, chicken, and pork suppers and fish fries” are their “standard methods of raising money.”
- They’ve also used “auctions, door-to-door soap sales, talent shows, junk sales, Firemen’s Day celebrations, and personal appeals for financial help.”
- Some firemen reach into their own pockets to pay their department’s bills.
- Each of eighteen rural fire departments receives \$1,500 per year from the county.
- Eight areas have a tax levy of ten cents on each \$100 of property valuation: Bay Leaf, Durham Highway, Rolesville, Six Forks, Stony Hill, Wake Forest Rural, Wake New Hope, and Yrac.
- Rural districts cover about seventy-five percent of unincorporated areas in the county.
- Some departments are “authorized to respond” within a four-mile radius of their stations, while others are limited to three-mile responses.
- Homeowners who live within rural districts can receive reduced fire insurance rates.

1970 to 1979 - More Milestones

1971 – Snapshot of apparatus:

DRAFT
Wake County Firemen's Association 4/30/71

EQUIPMENT IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

DEPARTMENT	STATION #	(1-4)		(5-6)		(7-8)		TANKER #	BEUL #
		EQUIP #	SPECIAL NUMS (MIRRORS, VANS, UTILITY, ETC)	EQUIP #	SPECIAL NUMS (MIRRORS, VANS, UTILITY, ETC)	EQUIP #	SPECIAL NUMS (MIRRORS, VANS, UTILITY, ETC)		
✓ APEX	4	41, 42, 43 Foam 44							
✓ BAY LEAF	15	25					47, 48		49
✓ CARY	5	51, 52, 53, 54					257, 258		259
Duchan Highway #1	16	161							59
Duchan Highway #2	17	171							
✓ FAIRGROUNDS	19	191, 192, 194							
FAIRVIEW	20	201, 204					197, 198, 196		
FALLS	21	211, 212					207, 208		
FUQUAY-VARINA	7	71, 72, 73, 74					217		219
GAENEER #1	8	81, 82, 83					77, 78		79
GAENEER #2	18	181					87, 88		
Holly Springs	14	141					187, 188		189
Hopkins	22	221, 224					147, 148		149
Knightdale	13	131, 132					227		229
✓ Moreisville #1	23	231,					137, 138		139
✓ Moreisville #2	24	241					237		239
✓ ROLESVILLE	25	251, 252, 157					247		249
✓ SIX FORKS	12	121, 122					257, 258		259
✓ STONEY HILL	26	261, 264, 263					127		129
SWIFT CREEK	27	271, 272					267, 268		269
WAKE FOREST	6	61, 62, 63, 64					277, 278		279
WAKE NEW HOPE	28	281, 282					67		69
WENDELL	11	111, 112					287, 288		289
✓ TRAC	29	291, 292					117		119
ZEBULON	9	91, 92, 93					297		299
							97, 98		99

1972 – County and city fire department dispatching transferred to new Raleigh / Wake County Emergency Communications Center in the spring of 1972. The telephone number 829-1911 is designated as county-wide emergency number, in anticipation of 911 availability in later decade.

- Most (all?) towns also have their own dispatchers, for police calls and other emergencies.
- Wake Forest and Wendell also operated Gamewell alarm boxes, in prior years/decades.
- Cary creates their own emergency communications center.
- By 2000s, Raleigh/Wake, Cary, Apex, and Holly Springs are operating their own communication centers, though with some integrations for fire and EMS dispatching.

1972

July 1, 1972

Budget notes (72-73):

- Rural fire departments receive \$1,500 yearly allotment.
- Raleigh Fire Department receives \$1,500 annually for “radio service for dispatching.”

- Other budget expenses include \$6,216 for capital outlay of equipment, and \$2,682 for maintenance and repair of equipment.

1974

July 1, 1974

Budget notes (74-75):

- Capital outlay for equipment of \$12,164, for new communication equipment.
- Maintenance of fire radio network also budgeted as \$13,466.
 - Costs associated with new Raleigh/Wake County Emergency Communications Center?
 - Both costs continue over subsequent budget years through 1977-78 (at least), and somewhat higher amounts.
- Raleigh-Wake County Civil Preparedness department has three employees:
 - Director Russell Capps.
 - Trainee Nolan Ramge.
 - Stenographer II Pauline Wood.

1978

July 28, 1978 – *News & Observer* profile of Raleigh-Wake County Emergency Preparedness Agency. Story notes:

- Coordinator is Russell Capps.
- Commission J. T. Knott chairs both the Wake County Fire Districts Commission and the Wake County Rescue Squads Commission.
- He's the county's liaison for emergency services.
- All county emergency services are coordinated by the EPA.
- The department also "develops emergency plans and warning systems."
- County provides monthly subsidies to [rural] fire [departments] and rescue squads.
- Twenty-first volunteer department being organized, in Morrisville-Carpenter.
- The departments are "linked" by the Wake County Firemen's Association.
- Major project of EPA in past year has been "preparation of emergency plans for all the public schools in Raleigh and Wake County."
 - Engineers surveyed each school to "determine the safest areas during tornadoes and other emergencies."
 - Plans were drawn and presented at the schools.
 - The schools began exercises to "familiarize the students with the procedures."
- County has added new equipment, that has expanded "county's capability to handle disasters."
- About \$20,000 worth of radio equipment added to county's fire and rescue squad radio networks.
 - Half was funded by county.
- Eight radio pagers for Zebulon Rescue Squad, five two-way radios for Wendell Rescue Squad, five two-way radios for Wake Forest Rescue Squad, a two-way radio for Garner-St. Mary's Rescue Squad, and a base station radio for Rex Hospital.
 - The radio will allow "communications with all ambulances and rescue squads and with other hospitals."
- EPA plans to convert a "large crash truck" into a "mobile field communications vehicle."

Wake County Fire Districts Commission referenced in above story.

- What was this organization? It's also referenced in the 1960 story about annexation impact. See above.
- Wake County Rescue Squads Commission also referenced.

1979, circa – Wake County Firemen's Association proposes fire station and equipment identification system.

- Unit numbers based on county station number.
- Engines are 1 – 4.
- Special units (small trucks, utility vans, etc.) are 5 – 6.
- Tankers are 7 – 8.
- Brush units are 9.
- Examples:
 - Garner Station 1
 - County Station 8
 - Engine 81, 82, 83
 - Squad 8
 - Tanker 87, 88

1980s – Mergers

- 1980s, mid – Wendell municipal fire department merges into Wendell Rural.
 - They had been operating as combined decade since early 1980s. Department signs fire protection contract with town.
- 1983 – Wake Forest municipal departments (WFFD and WFFD #2) and rural department merge.
 - Wake Forest Fire Department Incorporated is chartered.
 - Town became first municipality in state to contract fire protection to another agency.
 - Contract rate is \$0.05 cents per \$100 valuation and department receives \$24,000 for 1983-84 fiscal year under \$0.86 tax rate for town.
 - Merger is discussed as early as September 1981.
 - See this web page for detailed history.

1980s and 1990s – New Stations

Rural fire departments (or municipal departments with rural districts) add additional stations to address growth:

- Wake New Hope opens Station 2 at Wake Crossroads, 1988.
- Wendell opens Station 2 off Rolesville Road, 1988.
- Fairview opens Station 2 near Lake Wheeler Road, 1990.
- Fuquay-Varina opens Station 2 on Hilltop Road, 1991.
- Durham Highway opens Station 3 on Norwood Road, 1992.
- Bay Leaf opens Station 2 on Norwood Road, 1993.

- Knightdale opens Station 2 off Poole Road, 1995.
- Apex opens Station 2 in New Hill, 1997.
- Stony Hill opens Station 2 on New Light Road, 1997.
- Garner opens Station 3 on Timber Drive, 1999.

Some departments move stations, to larger facilities:

- Bay Leaf moves nearby on Six Forks Road, 1983.
- Swift Creek moves nearby on Holly Springs Road, 1983-84.
- Wendell moves from town hall to Wendell Boulevard (present street name), 1984.
- Wake Forest moves from two buildings on White Street to Elm Street, 1986.
- Fairgrounds moves nearby to District Drive, 1992.

Some departments renovate or further expand their stations:

- Morrisville adds three bays on Morrisville-Carpenter Road, 1984.
- Knightdale adds two bays and living areas on Hester Street, 1985.
- Rolesville expands their station on Young Street, 1986.
- Morrisville completely renovates station on Morrisville-Carpenter Road, 1992.
- Fairview renovates/rebuilds their station on Ten Ten Road, 1999.

Some departments also close some stations, due to annexation:

- Durham Highway closes station on Davis Drive off Highway 70, circa 1992.

[1980 to 1989 – More Milestones](#)

1980

County has breathing air compressor housed at EMS Station 1 on West Martin Street, also office of Emergency Management Director/Fire Marshal (?). Discussions in June 1980 to move to a Raleigh fire station located near the Beltline, possibly Station 11 or Station 14. (WCFCC)

July 1, 1980

Tax rates, from Annual Budget (80-81):

<u>FIRE DISTRICT</u>	<u>ASSESSED VALUE</u>	<u>RATE</u>	<u>APPROPRIATION</u>
Bayleaf	\$ 48,000,000	.05	\$24,000
Cary (YRAC)	61,000,000	.05	30,500
Durham Highway	94,000,000	.05	47,000
Fairgrounds	56,000,000	.05	28,000
Fairview (Ten-Ten)	23,000,000	.05	11,500
Falls	13,000,000	.05	6,500
Fuquay-Varina (Furina)	38,000,000	.05	19,000
Holly Springs	6,500,000	.05	3,250
Hopkins	10,000,000	.05	5,000
Knightdale (Alert)	57,000,000	.05	28,500
Morrisville	33,000,000	.05	16,500
Rolesville	26,000,000	.05	13,000
Six Forks	71,000,000	.05	35,500
Stoney Hill	9,000,000	.05	4,500
Swift Creek	41,000,000	.05	20,500
Wake Forest (Wakette)	46,000,000	.05	23,000
Wake-New Hope	180,000,000	.02	36,000
Wendell (Wendell Holmes)	21,000,000	.05	10,500
Zebulon (Wakelon)	24,000,000	.05	12,000
Raleigh	400,000	.20	800

Source: WCAB.

1981

County breathing air compressor moved to Station 11, by February 2, 1981. Procedure is to call Central and have them contact station when you are minutes out. Chiefs are recommended to carry bottles upright and secured when under pressure. (WCFCC)

Sites being examined for county fire training center. Fire Marshal Russell Capps reports that airport area land might be available, at February 10, 1981, meeting of Wake County Fire Chief's Council. (WCFCC)

From October 26, 1981, minutes of Wake County Fire Chief's Council. Several persons travel to Rocky Mount to view Rocky Mount Fire Department training center. Many [of the] current [or] best sites [sit] in glide path [of airport]. RDU owns best site, west of airport, at SR 1642. Some industries are interested in supporting project. (WCFCC)

1981-82

Between July 1, 1981 and June 30, 1982 - Three new fire tax districts created:

- Durham Highway – Dillard Road.
- Rolesville – Wake Crossroad.
- Wake-New Hope – Perry Creek.

1982

Five potential training sites discussed at Wake County Fire Chief's Council meeting, February 1, 1982. (WCFCC).

First responder program implemented in March 1982, first at Fairview FD.

- Details from *Raleigh Times*, March 11, 1982:
 - Program includes participation (administration?) by Wake County EMS, and their Training Coordinator Joseph Zalkin.
 - Twenty-six firefighters undergo about forty hours of basic life support training.
 - Chosen due to location between four rescue districts: Apex, Cary, Garner, and Fuquay-Varina.
 - Ambulance to the Fairview district takes as much as eight to fifteen minutes to arrive.
 - Departments serving Bay Leaf, Holly Springs, Hopkins, Morrisville and Stony Hill may soon join program.
 - Rural districts where ambulance response time averages eight to fifteen will be given priority status to implement the program.
- Others fire departments add service over subsequent years and decades, such as:
 - Wake-New Hope FD begins first responder between 1982 and 1985.
 - Swift Creek FD begins first responder in fall 1993.
 - Zebulon Rural FD begins first responder in 1999
 - Wake Forest FD begins first responder for county calls in 2000.
- The EMT-D program began in Raleigh in 1993.
 - Based on the success, Wake and Orange counties proposed a First Responder-D program in 1995.
 - The North Carolina Medical Board approved same in 1996 as a local county option.
 - Apex FD was first agency to provide service.
 - Hopkins FD performed first patient defibrillation.
 - (WCEMS web page, <http://www.wakegov.com/ems/system/Pages/firstresponder.aspx>)
- Effective July 1, 1999, every county fire department must provide fire responder services.
 - At least two firefighters to respond to every life-threatening emergency.
 - (N&O, 6/25/99)
- Some fire departments are providing extrication services. Others look to rescue squads for this service.
 - By late 1990s, most rescue squads will have ceased those services.
 - Only Garner Rescue Squad will continue through late 2000s.

July 1, 1982

Budget notes (82-83):

- Fire Marshal position is held concurrently by Emergency Management Director.
- This official performs fire inspections in schools and public buildings in unincorporated areas of the county, and functions as coordinator for staff support and training services for the fire departments.
- Emergency Management Division has three full-time positions.
- Source: WCAB.

1985

Training center:

- Wake County Fire Training Center constructed/completed on land adjoining the Shearon Harris nuclear power plant in New Hill.
- Cost \$700,000.

- Facility is only minimally used during the first couple years, until a county fire training program started in 1988.
- Source: WCFS.

May 1985, circa - Wake New Hope installs air bottle refilling system.

- From May 6, 1985, minutes of Wake County Fire Chief's Council: New Hope has purchased and installed an Eagle Air Compressor System. Has 5,000 PSI storage tanks available for fire departments in Wake County. Cost \$12,458.02, paid in full at time of delivery, and fund by the county with agreement fire department will provide housing, availability, and service to all fire departments on full-time basis. (WCFCC)

1985

July 1, 1985

Budget highlights (85-86):

- To improve service delivery of the rural fire departments, and coordinate training at the Fire Training Facility, the following full-time position and one radio equipped vehicle are authorized: Fire Marshal, Salary Grade 74, range \$22,536 - \$34,500. (WCAB)

1986

Wake County Fire Chief's Council meeting highlights:

- Meeting and meal planned for all Fire Chiefs to meet the new Fire Marshal, February 3, 1986.
- Discussion of resignation of Russell Capps, April 3, 1986.
- Wake County Fire Chief's Council votes to support request for county to purchase cascade system to be located in Fuquay-Varina, May 13, 1986.
- Special meeting called to discuss background of BOC decision to hire full-time county Fire Marshal, June 3, 1986.
- Radio procedures adopted, August 1986.
 - Use Code 1, Code 2, and Condition Red or Blue, with a short description of fire scene on arrival.
 - Procedures for receiving an alarm, answering an alarm, en route to fire scene, arrival, fire scene, etc.
- Source: WCFCC

First full-time fire marshal hired.

- Frederick "Rick" P. Hall IV, 34, starts working on February 10, 1986.
- Formerly Assistant Chief with Guilford College Fire Department.
- His salary is \$29,304.
- As Fire Marshal, he'll be responsible for inspecting public facilities located outside municipalities, such as schools and nursing homes.
- He'll also coordinate activities at the county's new fire training center, and working with the volunteer fire departments.
- Hall is the county's first choice from more than 70 applicants.

- The job was previously held by J. Russell Capps, who is also the director of the county's Emergency Management office.
- In July 1985, the Board of Commissioners decided that the growing number of structures in the county, the opening of the new fire training center, and planning opening of the nuclear power plant, were "more than one small office could handle."
- After leaving Wake County (in 1988?), he's hired as the first full-time Fire Chief for Summerfield FD in Guilford County.
- Source: N&O/RT, Jan. 28, 1986, and oral histories.

July 1, 1986

Budget highlights (86-87):

- Full-time Fire Inspector/Trainer added, to [help] facilitate use of the Fire Training Facility and conduct required fire inspections of day care centers, nursing homes and foster care homes. (WCAB)

1987

First aerial apparatus added outside Raleigh, 1987.

- Grumman aerial platform in Zebulon.
- Followed by 1988 Pierce in Cary.
- Later early aerials include:
 - 1989 Simon-Duplex/LTI aerial ladder in Apex (bought used?)
 - 1991 E-One aerial ladder in Knightdale (sold 1993),
 - 1978 Mack aerial ladder in Knightdale (bought used),
 - 1979 Mack/1958 American LaFrance tiller in Wendell (bought used in 1999/2000).

July 1, 1987

Budget highlights (87-88):

- Full-time Fire Inspector added.
- Fire Services has four positions.
- Source: WCAB.

October 5, 1987 – *News & Observer* reports that county commissioners have tentatively approved a new fire district named East Wake, as part of a plan to provide closer service to 6,300 people in "no man's land" between Knightdale and Rolesville. They recommend creating a new district after the existing departments failed during the summer to agree upon a coverage plan. Then what happened? The fire departments quickly came back to the table after this proposal, and agreed to divide coverage of the area between Knightdale, Rolesville, Wendell, and Wake-New Hope fire department districts. Additionally, two substations would be built by Wake-New Hope and Wendell. Source: Legeros Fire Blog.

1988

Ed Schmelzer appointed Fire Marshal effective February 15, 1988. (WCFCC)

First ongoing countywide training program begins operation.

- Until now, departments outside Raleigh and Cary “held their own in-house training sessions, sent their firefighters to seminars and encouraged them to take college courses.”
- Five-story training tower scheduled for completion at training center that year.
- Training grounds also have “three burn pits, a two-story smoke house and burn house combination, and a simulated liquid propane gas burn unit.”
- Dewey Poole hired as county’s first fire trainer. Part of his task is “marketing” the training facility, which was only being used about twice a year.
- Source: N&O/RT, June 23, 1988.

Training tower due to be completed in August. (WCFCC)

1989

July 1, 1989

Budget highlights (89-90):

- Fire Services has seven positions.
- Three positions approved by BOC in January 1989.
- Source: WCAB.

Wake New Hope places dive team in operation on July 14, 1989. Available countywide. (WCFCC).

- Dive team separates from fire department in May [1990]. (Double-check)
- Board of Directors decides to stop supporting the service in April 1991.
- Only two of the team’s twelve to fifteen recovery calls had been in the department’s district.
- The team provided their services countywide and at no cost.
- Forms Wake Underwater Search and Recovery, a private non-profit group in August 1991.
- Team has thirty male and female members, mostly law enforcement officers, firefighters, or paramedics.
- (N&O, 9/5/91)

Wake County Arson Response Team in service (?), effective September 1, 1989. (WCFCC)

1990s – 2000s

More town-based rural departments begin merging into their municipal counterparts:

- Apex Rural into AFD in 2002.
- Zebulon Rural into Zebulon FD in 2000.

Other towns take over their private-run fire departments:

- Holly Springs Rural into town in 1995.
- Morrisville Rural into town in 1995.

Some smaller departments execute mergers.

- Fairgrounds and Yrac become Western Wake in 1998.
 - First merger in county since the 1994 study recommended some consolidations of departments.
 - It's initiated by the two departments.
- Six Forks merges with Bay Leaf in 2002.
 - Merger was suggested/requested by the county.
 - Source: Wake County Fire Commission meeting minutes, March 16, 1999.

Other departments change, due to service area changes due to municipal withdrawal:

- Knightdale becomes Eastern Wake in 2003.
- Town of Knightdale creates own fire department the same year.

Source: MJL/WCFD

[1990 to 1999 - More Milestones](#)

1990

New radio channel plan implemented January 1, 1990. (WCFCC)

July 1, 1990

Budget highlights (90-91):

- Full-time Fire Inspector added, to more effectively inspect premises for fire code violations and carry out new responsibilities required by state law.
- Fire Services has eight positions.
- Source: WCAB.

1991

Wake County Fire Chief's Council votes to recommend to county that mobile air compressor be purchased for Wake Forest, January 22, 1991. (WCFCC)

1992

New fireground sectors adopted, as recommended by Wake County Fire Chief's Council. Effective by January 30, 1992. (WCFCC)

May 16, 1992 – *News & Observer* reports on “Wake, firefighters differ on taxes – Volunteers seek more money.”
Story notes:

- Property reassessment completed in Wake County last year.
- This increased property values an average of forty-three percent.
- Homeowners poised to be hit with increased bill for fire tax, unless reductions are made.
- Fire departments will see higher annual revenues, some as much as sixty percent higher.
- Fire Chiefs see “opportunity to improve service and upgrade equipment without raising taxes.”
- For years, the BOC have “approved firefighters’ budgets without much question.”
- This year, County Manager has been directed by BOC to “hold down taxes.”
- He’s recommended fire district rates be reduced, to offset increase in property tax values.
- Fire Chief have thus looked to re-examine their proposed budgets, based on County Manager’s recommendation.
- What happened? See Appendix for chart of fire tax rates. Many districts were reduced.

July 1, 1992

Budget highlights (92-93):

- Fire Services has 11.5 positions.
- Public Safety Committee of BOC develops performance standards for operations of volunteer fire departments, in areas of response time, manpower on scene at a fire, automatic mutual aid, water supply agreements, training, contingencies and reserve accounts, fire education, fire investigations, and in other areas. These performance standards are to be written directly into the contracts for service between the fire departments and Wake County. (WCAB)

1993

July 1, 1993

Budget highlights (93-94):

- Fire Services has 11.5 positions.
- New Bay Leaf fire station has opened.
- Fire departments are asked to prepare budget requests that would allow them to fulfill the performance standards [see FY 92-93] in the new contract form. These requests have been scaled back, in many cases, through an analysis of need by the Fire Marshal’s office and Budget & Management Services.
- Some tax districts receive rate changes.
- Source: WCAB.

Snapshot of rural fire districts from Fiscal Year 1993-94 budget document, published prior to July 1, 1993:

- Apex – Serves southwestern portion of county, including town. One station. Volunteers and paid staff. Tax rate 8.5 cents. Budget and \$197,173.
- Bay Leaf – Serves county area between Raleigh northern borders and Falls Lake. Two stations at either end of district. Volunteers and paid staff. Tax rate 5.5 cents, with request for increase denied, to fund new pumper truck. Budget \$448,150.
- Cary (Yrac) – Serves areas in and around Cary that haven't been annexed, from one station in center of town. All volunteer. Tax rate 8 cents, raised from 7.5 cents to offset shrinking tax base. Budget \$113,834.
- Durham Highway – Northwestern corner of county adjacent to Highway 70, west of city limits, from two stations. Volunteers and paid personnel. Tax rate 6 cents, raised from 4 cents, to honor debt obligations incurred with construction of second station and purchase of new apparatus. Budget \$350,403.
- Fairgrounds – District includes area west of city boundaries. All volunteer. Tax rate 9 centers, raised from 6.5 cents, to offset annexation losses. Budget \$119,675.
- Fairview – District composed largely of farm land and some rural subdivisions lying approximately halfway between Raleigh and Fuquay-Varina. Two stations at either end of district. All volunteer, but converting to some paid staff. Tax rate 6.5 centers, raised from 4 cents, for staffing. \$209,353.
- Falls – Serves area northeast of city, generally east of Falls Lake dam. District gradually shrinking due to annexation. One station. Volunteer and paid staff. Tax rate 9.5 centers, increased from 7.5 cents to offset losses due to annexation. Budget \$89,762.
- Fuquay-Varina – Serves southern reaches of county and town. Two stations. All volunteer. Tax rate 8.5 cents, increased from 7.5 cents, to fund first influx of paid staff. Budget \$302,558.
- Garner – Serves southeastern portion of county and town. Two fire stations. Combination of volunteers and paid personnel. Tax rate 6 cents. Budget \$329,853.
- Holly Springs – Serves far southwestern portion of county, including town and Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant. Serves as backup to plant's fire brigade. One station. All volunteer. Tax rate 9.5 cents, raised from 6 centers, for new equipment needs and rising costs. Budget \$41,103.
- Hopkins – Serves rural area along county's northeastern border, between Rolesville and Zebulon. One station. All volunteer. Tax rate 7.5 cents, raised from 5 centers, primarily to allow purchase of new pumper. Budget \$54,266.
- Knightdale – Serves area east of Knightdale, including town. One station. Paid and volunteer. Tax rate 7 cents, raised from 6 centers, to fund payments on a ladder truck, and set aside funds for a future replacement station. Budget \$229,600.
- Morrisville – Serves area west of Cary, reaching county's western border, and including town of Morrisville. Two stations. Paid and volunteer staff. Tax rate 10 cents, raised from 5 centers, to support growing operating costs. Budget \$83,648.
- Raleigh – Not a fire department, but payment to county by portion of taxpayers not in any town or city limits or fire district. Tax rate 9.5 cents. Budget \$1,366.
- Rolesville – Serves area in northeastern portion of county, including town. One station. All volunteer. Tax rate 6.5 cents. Budget \$150,903.
- Six Forks – Serves area adjacent to northwestern border of city. One station operated in unison with Six Forks Rescue Squad. Paid and volunteer personnel. Tax rate 6 cents, raised from 5.5, due to natural increases in operating costs, most notably insurance payments. \$154,543.

- Stony Hill – Serves far northern reaches of county, including most of land north of Falls Lake. One station. All volunteer. Tax rate 9.5 cents, raised from 7 cents, to raise money for new fire apparatus and eventually purchase land for replacement of aging station. Budget \$78,331.
- Swift Creek – Located in area southwest of city and southeast of Cary. One station. All volunteer. Tax rate 4.5 cents, raised from 4 cents, over rising insurance costs. Budget \$151,416.
- Wake-New Hope – Serves combined urban and rural area east of city. Two stations. Paid and volunteer members. Tax rate 7.5 cents, raised from 6.5 cents, due to district recently losing a large amount of property value, though only a small amount of land, due to recent annexations. Budget \$466,855.
- Wake Forest – Serves northeastern corner of county, including town. One station. Volunteer plus first paid staff, added this year in response to inability to provide adequate staff at scene of daytime incidents. Tax rate of 6.5 cents, raised from 5 cents, for staffing. Budget \$79,234.
- Wendell – Serves large rural area in eastern portion of county, including town. Two stations. Volunteer and paid staff. Also operates haz-mat response program on contract basis with county. Tax rate 8 cents, raised from 7 cents, to meet general rise in operating costs. Budget \$141,847.
- Zebulon – Serves far eastern portion of county, particularly the region surrounding the town, which has its own fire department. One station. All volunteer. Tax rate 7.5 cents, raised from 6.5 cents, driven by general operating costs, such as small equipment. Budget \$78,786.

1994

July 1, 1994

Budget notes (94-95):

- Several fire departments request tax rate increases.
- No increase is recommended for any district.
- Three districts have tax rates reduced, at request of the fire departments.
- Source: WCAB.

Snapshot:

WAKE COUNTY APPARATUS SUMMARY INVENTORY

DEPARTMENT	Pumpers	Pumper Tanker	Tankers	Mini Pumpers	Heavy Rescue	Brush	Command	Aerial Appar.	Others	Total
Apex	3	1	2		1	2		1	2	12
Bayleaf	2	3	1		1	1			2	10
Cary	(5)				(1)	(1)		(1)	(10)	
Durham Hwy.	2	1	2			1			1	7
Fairgrounds	1	1	2			1			1	6
Fairview	2	1	4		1					8
Falls		3				1				4
Fuquay Varina	4	1	4			1			3	13
Garner	2	4	2			3	1		3	15
Holly Springs	2		2			1			1	6
Hopkins		2	1			1			2	6
Knightdale	1	4		1		1			2	9
Morrisville		5				2			2	9
Raleigh										
R.D. Airport					(1)				(5)	(6)
Rolesville	3		2	1		1			1	8
Six Forks	1	2	1			1			1	6
Stony Hill	1	2	1			2				6
Swift Creek	1	2	2			1				6
Wake Forest	2	1	2		1	2			2	10
Wake New Hope	2	2	5	2	1	1			1	14
Wendell	2	2	1			2	1		3	11
Yrac		3				1			1	5
Zebulon	(2)							(1)	(1)	(4)
Zebulon Rural	1	1	2			1				5
TOTAL	32	41	36	4	5	27	2	1	28	176

September 28, 1994 – Final report of TriData’s *Comprehensive Review of Wake County Fire Protection* is submitted to the Board of Commissioners. Includes recommendations in these areas:

- Overall system of fire protection
 - Restructure existing fire departments into smaller number of organizations that would all function as one system.
- Volunteer organizations
 - Continue to utilize volunteer organizations as primary emergency responders for foreseeable future, though fire protection by them must be better coordinated. County should take a much more active role in coordination and supporting them.
- Volunteer and career personnel
 - Develop new system around concept of each complementing other in their duties. Utilize career personnel for functions not practical for volunteers, as well as other functions. Establish duty crews to ensure volunteer staffing is available. Ensure minimal entry-level, training and performance requirements for all career and volunteer members in county.
- Relationship between rural fire departments and municipalities
 - Joint planning must occur, to improve system resources and eliminate redundancies. Consider transition of rural department into municipal department, especially in areas where municipality is becoming dominant component of service area. Combine rural departments to create smaller number of stronger organizations to serve contiguous unincorporated areas. Restructure fire

districts accordingly, or combine into single fire district. Define so closest station responds in emergency.

- Fire advisory board
 - Appoint and empower a board to be primary source of policy direction for fire protection, and advise county commissioners on fire service needs.
- Restructuring the Fire Marshal's Office
 - Hire a county fire administrator, who leads office with three divisions: Fire Marshal, Support Services, and Human Resources. Create two additional fire inspectors/investigators ASAP. More clearly define FM role and authority in area of emergency response.
- Consolidation of tax districts and distributions of funds
 - Consolidate the twenty-three fire districts into one countywide district, with one tax rate. Recommend 10 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation. Funding for capital projects based on countywide priorities, with money coming from single tax district.
- Insurance class ratings
 - Establish 9S rating as minimum for entire county. Set objective of at least Class 8 to all built-up areas, and at least Class 5 in urban areas.
- Response standards
 - Establish a more reasonable basis standard for initial response. At least one attack unit with four people within five minutes, and full assignment of 12 to 15 people within 8 to 10 minutes, and with capability to establish and maintain at least 350 GPM within 10 minutes, while conducting interior search and rescue and suppression activities.
- Fire prevention and public fire safety education
 - Where possible, use line firefighters to perform inspections and conduct education as coordinated by Fire Administrator on countywide basis. Develop program to train and qualify firefighters to perform inspections of low-hazard occupancies.
- Fire investigation
 - Establish improved system for follow-up investigations of suspicious fires. This should involve LEO organizations and FM staff.
- Apparatus
 - If obtained through tax funds, future purchases should become county property. Purchases should be coordinated and planned by advisory board, to help strategically locate apparatus and eliminate duplicate purchases. Replacement schedules should be based on average of 15 years of first-line duty, but also prioritized by board. Maintenance program based on mileage, condition, and suitability of vehicles, not strictly age.
- Facilities
 - If built using tax funds, should become county property. Establish a CIP committee to assist with facility planning. Committee should identify and priority facility projects. Consider creating joint-use facilities, automatic mutual aid when evaluation locations of new facilities, and future design needs for sleep-in, live-in, and career personnel. At a minimum, provide a fire station within a maximum of five road miles for all developed areas in county.

- Special rescue and hazardous materials
 - Establish plan to locate, fund, train, and equip three additional technical rescue teams across county. Should be coordinated with Raleigh and Cary. County supporting Raleigh and Wendell for haz-mat response.
- Training
 - Create HR position to develop training system for all fire departments providing services to Wake County. Establish full-time Chief of Training position. Establish a task force to work with both, to create system of a competency-based training programs for all ranks and all departments. Develop standard Wake County Training Manual. Implement site safety recommendations from NCDOT. Establish certification program for all live fire training instructors. Establish computer-based record keeping. Establish training program requiring each contracted department to participate in annual evaluations. Establish drill schedule that requires multiple departments to train together. Develop management training series.
- Communications
 - Redesign system and protocols so same communications protocols are used by all departments. Ensure all departments and units in county can communicate.

Read entire report: <http://legeros.com/ralwake/photos/weblog/wcfc/tridata/1994/>

After September 1994

Fire Marshal's Office restructured to include a county fire administrator.

What other recommendations from the TriData study were implemented?

1995

First public safety (joint police and fire) department created in Holly Springs. Departments are split in 2006.

- Knightdale Public Safety created in 2003, as new municipal fire department. Departments are split in 2013.

July 1, 1995

Accomplishments, from Annual Budget (95-96):

- Implemented the WCTEAM, a coordinated effort reducing public safety manpower for responses to hazardous materials spills and other major incidents.
- Implemented new shift schedule for fire/rescue personnel to reduce overtime expenditures.
- Started a bulk purchasing program for volunteer fire departments to purchase commodities at lower costs.
- Started “special services unit” for rehabilitation and medical surveillance for responders at emergency scenes.
 - Converted modular ambulance.
 - Housed at Fairgrounds Fire Department.
 - Replaced in 2000s (?) by newer scene-support vehicle operated by Wake County Fire Services.

- Discontinued (?) after Wake County EMS begins providing scene support and rehab with Truck 1 in 2007. **Speculation.**
- Source: WCAB.

1996

July 1, 1996

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (96-97):

- Responded and supervised county-wide response to Hurricane Fran and tornadoes which touched down in eastern Wake County.
- After seeking and gaining approval for building a county-wide 800mHz trunked radio system, emergency operations center, and emergency communications center, these projects were placed on hold to develop inter-jurisdictional consensus.
- Obtained two mobile classrooms from Carolina Power & Light for use at the fire/rescue training center.
- Formed a specialized body recovery unit in joint cooperation with Fairgrounds Volunteer Fire Department.
- Source: WCAB.

1997

July 1, 1997

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (97-98):

- Re-instituted Public Safety Day featuring public safety and encouraging volunteer participation.
- Promoted volunteer retention and recruitment through a number of programs to acknowledge the importance of the volunteer component within the fire protection system.
- Initiated the “deceased body transport” program for the entire county. By contracting with a specific agency to transport bodies at accidents and fire scenes, the waiting time for this transport has been reduced.
- The deputy fire marshals can now enter fire inspection data while in the field as well as electronically obtain pertinent data remotely.
- Improved performance of fire inspections of commercial buildings by increasing the number of inspections and positioning the county in a proper schedule according to General Statute requirements.
- Completed design of 800 MHz radio system.
- Source: WCAB.

1998

Need for improved radio communications cited in News & Observer, January 21, 1998.

- Raleigh, Cary, Apex have their own dispatch centers for police, fire, EMS.
- Wendell, Wake Forest, Holly Springs, Fuquay-Varina dispatch own police.
- NCSU and RDU dispatch own fire and police.

- Wake EMS dispatched by Raleigh ECC.

First fire-based EMS provider established in Holly Springs. The fire department begins service April 1, 1998.

- Discontinued circa 2007, when Wake County EMS deploys a full-time unit in Holly Springs.
- County's second fire-based EMS provider is created in 2010, when Apex EMS merges with the town. It's merged with fire department for a number of months before being separated into own town department.

Wake County Fire Commission formed as advisory board, as recommended in 1994 fire service study.

- Wake County Fire Chief's Council still active as of April 1999.
 - Ed Brinson was president 1996 to 1998.
 - **When did organization stop meeting?**
- First meeting of fire commission is November 24, 1998.
- Location was Wake County Commons Building.
- Present were:
 - George Mills, North Region/Primary
 - A. C. Rich, North Region/Alternate
 - Tom Vaughan, East Region/Primary
 - Rodney Privette, East Region/Alternate
 - Ed Brinson, West Region/Primary
 - Tony Chiotakis, West Region/Alternate
 - Phil Mitchell, South Region/Primary
 - Max Ashworth, Citizen/Consumer
 - Ned Perry, Citizen/Consumer
 - Chuck Sannipoli, Citizen/Consumer
 - Bonnie Woodruff, Citizen/Consumer
 - Blaine Parks, Citizen/Consumer (Alternate)
 - Bill Stevenson, President of Firemen's Association
 - Cloyce Anders, External Facilitator (Non-voting)
 - Ray Echevarria, Interim Director-Fire/Rescue Division
- Absent were:
 - Ken Farmer, South Region/Alternate
 - Nancy Schwarm, Citizen/Consumer
- Notes:
 - Schedule set as third Tuesday of each month.
 - Distributed were:
 - Copy of fire service contract.
 - Draft of Rules of Procedure for commission.
 - Roster of members.
 - Handout, two studies of volunteer fire service in DE and PA.
 - Current priority issues for commission established as:

- Fire Protection Contract Development
- Performance, Service and Contract Compliance Issues
- Funding Distribution/Service District Budget Development.

Fire Commission Committees

- The first appointed committees on November 24, 1998, were:
 - Capital Projects Improvement Committee.
 - Budget Review Committee.
 - Contract and Performance Requirements Committee.
 - Planning Committee.
- Committees continue to be created over the years, decades. Some are ongoing, others are ad hoc as heeded.
 - Apparatus Committee.
 - Budget Committee.
 - Compensation Committee.
 - Equipment Committee.
 - Facilities Committee.
 - Staffing Committee.
 - Etc.

See minutes dating to the first meeting at <http://www.wakegov.com/fire/commission/minutes/>

July 1, 1998

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (98-99):

- Smoke Detector Enforcement Program. Effective 1, 1999, the [state] adopted provisions to enforce mandatory smoke detectors in rental property. [Fire Services] prepared a plan to facilitate enforcement [of same], using existing staff, without a budget increase.
- Volunteer retention and recruitment was promoted through incentive and awards programs.
- County fire departments were encouraged to serve a system and not individual areas through the creation of a single fire tax district. Mutual agreements, automatic aid agreements, mergers of departments, and discussion of mergers of other agencies [show evidence] of progress.
- Completed new classroom facility at fire training center.
- Contracts were cancelled in December 1998, after bids were award for [the postponed projects of ?] an 800MHz trunked radio system, a communications/emergency operations center, and a computer aided dispatch system.
- Source: WCAB.

1999

July 1, 1999

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (99-00):

- Implemented the fire protection service tax district. This single fire tax district replaces the previous system of financing fire protection through 21 separate fire districts.
- Expanded the fire protection service tax district to include Town of Wendell corporate limits.
- Expanded medical first responder service throughout the unincorporated areas of Wake County.
- Implemented the “two closest fire station response” concept for all structure fires within the county.
- Provide out of county assistance to fire departments in eastern North Carolina affected by flooding as a result of Hurricane Floyd.
- Completed a major renovation of Fairview Fire Department Station #1.
- The Zebulon Rural Fire Department merged with the Town of Zebulon to become [part of] a municipal fire department.
- Garner Fire Department completed construction of Fire Station #3 located on Timber Drive.
- Rolesville Fire Department entered into a personnel services contract with Wake County to provide two full-time firefighters at Rolesville Fire Department during normal weekday working hours.
- The North Carolina Department of Insurance certified two fire insurance districts: Garner Suburban Fire Insurance District served by Garner Fire Department and the expanded Alert Fire Insurance District served by the Knightdale Fire Department.
- Conducted in excess of 27,000 man-hours of life fire training and drills with no OSHA lost time accidents.
- Promoted volunteer retention and recruitment through a number of programs to acknowledge the importance of the volunteer component within the fire protection system.
- Source: WCAB.

July 1, 1999 - Fire tax districts consolidated into single countywide district.

- Effective July 1, 1999.
 - Created by county commissioners in July 1998.
 - Consolidated rates for twenty-one rural fire districts.
 - Source: <http://www.wakegov.com/fire/pages/fireservfaq.aspx>
- Origins:
 - Certain areas of the county have experienced more tax base growth than others. In addition, some residents of the county were located beyond five road miles from a fire station. Residents who were beyond five road miles from a fire station were not paying fire tax to the fire department, but received fire protection services from the fire department. All of these situations combined to create an environment with unequal levels of funding across the county.
 - The mission of progressive fire departments was expanding in scope. In addition to the traditional fire suppression services, modern fire departments were providing emergency medical care, response to vehicle accidents, water rescue, confined space rescue, hazardous materials response, fire and life safety education programs, and responding to an ever-increasing number of various fire and other alarms.
 - In large part, services provided by the county fire departments were dependent upon tax revenue generated within the individual rural fire tax districts. With the imbalance of funding across the county, varying levels of service existed across the county.

- The Service Tax District was intended to provide a level of funding to all county fire departments based upon county-wide priorities.
- Source: <http://www.wakegov.com/fire/pages/fireservfaq.aspx>
- Municipalities were offered inclusion in the Fire Protection Service Tax District.
 - The County would charge residents within the corporate limits fire tax (as if they were in the County area) and the County would take care of fire protection. The Towns could get out of the fire business (so to speak).
 - This was inviting for some Towns because they had a history of long battles with their contracted fire departments over funding each year.
 - If the town enrolled, the town received a seat on the Fire Commission to make sure your interests were protected.
 - In the end, Wendell was the only town to enroll.
- Impacts:
 - Stony Hill ceased fundraising after tax district changes, as it was no longer needed.

See Appendix for chart of tax rates from 1987 to 2003

2000 to 2009 - More Milestones

2000

July 1, 2000

Accomplishments from prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (00-01):

- Established and implemented a process for developing a fire service capital improvement program.
- Received and placed in service a new specialized vehicle to support on-scene emergency operations.
- Entered into a personnel services agreement with the Stony Hill and Western Wake Fire Departments providing two full-time county staff at the fire departments during normal weekday working hours.
- Developed curriculum and related instructional modules to provide Fire Officer Level I certification training course. This collaborative effort with the State Fire Marshal's Office is the first of its type in the state.
- Implemented a computerized document imaging system that allows for electronic storage and access to important documents including but not limited to fire incident reports and contractual agreements with fire departments.
- Developed prototype fire station designs incorporating co-location of fire and EMS services, a fire substation and a central fire station.
- Developed a facility capital improvement plan which prioritized three projects for FY 00-01: constitution of fire station in Willow Springs community, renovations to Knightdale Fire Station #1 and renovations to Wendell Fire Station #1 and #2.
- The Town of Zebulon Fire Department was surveyed by Insurance Services Office, Inc., and reduced their public protection classification in county areas from Class 6/9S to Class 3 9S.

- Western Wake Fire/Rescue was surveyed by Insurance Services Office, Inc. and reduced their public protection classification from Class 6/9S to Class 4 district wide.
- Initiated a Child Safety Seat inspection program at Apex Fire Department, Gamer Fire Department, Hopkins Fire Department.
- Six Forks Fire Department, and Zebulon Fire Department. Stony Hill Fire Department entered into a personnel services contract with Wake County to provide a full time Captain at Stony Hill Fire Department during normal weekday working hours.
- Western Wake Fire/Rescue entered into a personnel services contract with Wake County to provide a full time Captain at Western Wake Fire/Rescue during normal weekday working hours.
- Initiated program to revise fire insurance districts to represent closest fire station response and to extend districts to 6 mile maximum into areas currently classified as unprotected.
- The North Carolina Department of Insurance recertified three Class 9S fire insurance districts: the Hopkins Fire Insurance District served by the Hopkins Fire Department, the Ten Ten Fire Insurance District served by the Fairview Fire Department, and the Stony Hill Fire Insurance District served by the Stony Hill Fire Department.
- Source: WCAB.

2001

July 1, 2001

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (01-02):

- Completed merger of the Apex Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. with the Town of Apex Fire Department. After consolidation is complete, the Town of Apex will provide fire protection and other emergency services in the Hipex Fire District.
- Completed the planning, implementation, and consolidation of the Six Forks Volunteer Fire Department into the Bay Leaf Volunteer Fire Department.
- Began construction of a prototype fire station to serve the Willow Springs community. Construction is expected to be completed Summer 2002.
- Collaboratively developed a new fire protection contract with Wake County for rural fire protection services. The new agreement increases fiscal accountability for the private, non-profit fire departments.
- Continued a Child Safety Seat inspection program at Apex Fire Department, Gamer Fire Department, Hopkins Fire Department, Six Forks Fire Department, and Zebulon Fire Department.
- DOI recertified the Furina Fire Insurance District, served by the Fuquay-Varina Fire Department, from a split 6/9S to a split 4/9S.
- Source: WCAB.

July 19, 2001 – *News & Observer* story reports on “Fire squads face new spending rules”. Story notes:

- County seeking “sweeping changes” on how private fire and EMS departments are managed.
- Wake County Rescue Association discussed the proposed new rules on Wednesday.
- Wake County Fire Commission may talk about them tonight.

- County contracts with sixteen private fire departments and eight private EMS providers, to serve about forty percent of county residents.
- The fire departments are funded almost entirely by some \$8.5M in county and municipal taxes.
- EMS agencies receive about \$1.4M from county, which accounts for about half their budgets.
- Audits have shown that “the departments sometime poorly account for the money. Auditors note the same problems year after year in some departments. Too few people handle the money; financial records are filled with errors; federal tax laws are ignored.”
- Proposed new rules would empower county to ensure financial problems are corrected.
- They would require departments to submit written plans for addressing problems noted in audits.
- Also to use “generally accepted accounting principles,” to conduct criminal background checks on new employees, and to hold open meetings in compliance with state laws.
- For fire departments, proposed changes also add a prohibition on Fire Chiefs or paid firefighters from sitting on board of directors. They would require departments who sell equipment to return proceeds to the county in most cases. And if audits show financial mismanagement, the county would have authority to take over the department’s finances.
- The new rules were written by a committee that included three Wake County Fire Chiefs.

2002

May 25, 2002 – *News & Observer* story reports on “Fire squad funding debated.” Context is a possible increase in funding for Knightdale Fire Department from prior budget year. The article cites such points as:

- Six months earlier, a county-funding audit showed “widespread financial mismanagement” in the department, which operates as a private, non-profit corporation.
- County commissioners had yet to discuss the department’s performance in a public meeting.
- Proposed increase in annual budget, of additional \$354,600.
- Represents nearly sixty percent increase over prior year’s budget.
- Money would replace annual payment from town.
- Town offered to take over the entire fire district, which is 54 square-miles including 51 square-miles of unincorporated areas.
- Commissions decided to continue contract with the private fire department.
- Two departments will service the district beginning July 1, 2002.
 - Town fire department is part of newly created Public Safety Department.
 - Includes three full-time firefighters, and over twenty volunteer firefighters who are supplemented by Public Safety Police Officers and other town employees.
 - Source: MJL.
- Five fire chiefs in eastern Wake County sign letter, opposing the funding increase.
- The proposed increase was subsequently adopted.
 - Legeros: The county over the years and decades supported volunteer fire departments impacted by annexation with such measures as increasing tax rates, to adjust for lost revenues.

County ownership of new fire department facilities introduced. First project is fire station for Willow Springs community, operated by Fuquay-Varina Fire Department:

- Fuquay-Varina Station 3 – New service area - Opened 2002.
- Stony Hill Station 1 – Replace existing station - Opened 2004.
- Garner Station 4 – New service area - Opened 2010.
- Bay Leaf Station 1 – Replace existing station - Opened 2013.

July 1, 2002

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (02-03):

Fire/Rescue:

- Completed a USFA study of fire investigation services in Wake County
- Initiated fire station and fire truck deployment/location study
- Completed study of compensation of part- and full-time firefighters, and received Fire Commission approval of implementation strategy
- In partnership with Progress Energy, improved Fire/Rescue Training Center

Fire Tax District:

- The Apex fire department will utilize additional funding to provide stipends for volunteer coverage at Station #2 near New Hill. The department is currently providing 24/7 protection in the unincorporated area of the Hipex fire district from this station with volunteers.
- Hopkins and Stony Hill fire departments will receive funding for part-time personnel for greater staffing availability to improve response times.
- Funding is provided to begin implementation of a pay and classification plan proposed for adoption in an effort to standardize pay and classification practices among the various contracting departments.
- Completion of a station location and fire apparatus study is expected to be completed in early fiscal year 2003-2004. The results of this analysis will lead to a master plan for capital needs for the fire service delivery system of the contracting agencies.

CIP:

- The projects currently in the capital budget for this element address issues such as Fire and EMS coverage areas, response times, renovations, and installation of back-up power generators for EMS and Fire stations. These needs were identified in studies conducted by Wake County during the late 1990s. Currently, the County is developing a long-term strategy and capital plan for providing Fire and EMS facilities to identify and prioritize the needs for facility renovations and new construction.
- In FY2004, investments totaling \$3.6 million to focus on the following fire facilities and equipment capital:
 - **Stony Hill Headquarters Station:** Complete construction and open new combination Fire/EMS facility by end of second quarter.
 - **East Garner Area Station:** Finalize site evaluation and acquire land needed for prototype fire station; complete design work, award construction contract and begin construction.
 - **Master Planning process,** review with Fire Commission and obtain approval from Board of Commissioners; incorporate master plan recommendations into capital plan as appropriate.
 - **Fire Facility Assessments:** Complete Phase I of life safety and code improvements identified in the February 2003 report based on available funding; prepare bid package and obtain bids from contractors for remainder of Phase I improvements.
 - **Emergency Communications Improvements:** Purchase and place into operation all 800 MHz radios and pager units as planned.
 - **Hopkins Fire Station:** Complete renovation of existing facility to add sleeping quarters, showers and

restrooms.

- Source: WCAB.

2003

November 2003 – Final report of TriData’s *Wake County Fire/EMS Capital Facility and Equipment Study* received.

Recommendations include:

- Apparatus:
 - Countywide procurement and deployment.
 - Standard countywide specs.
 - Countywide maintenance program.
- Stations:
 - Relocate four fire stations (HSPS 2, KPS, GFD 1, AFD 1).
 - Construct eight new stations (Knightdale, Garner, Apex, etc.) over the next decade to improve the ability to meet the Wake County service standards, particularly in growth areas.
 - Phase out seven stations (Falls, WWFD 1, WWFD 1, NHFD 1, EWFD 2, BLFD 3, MFD 3) that could be served as well or better by resources from nearby fire stations, if their small service areas could be contracted out.
- System:
 - Develop a “seamless system” with
 - Closet unit response independent of boundaries.
 - Integrated planning of fire station locations and apparatus.
 - Integrated planning of fire and EMS.
 - Mutual department back-up with automatic aid. “No department an island.”
 - Common, standardized equipment purchases.
 - Common maintenance and replacement policy.
- Data:
 - Need improved data on number of personnel responding on first-in units, cost for repairs per apparatus, complete tally of calls and response times.

Read entire report <http://legeros.com/ralwake/photos/weblog/wcfc/tridata/2004/>

2004

July 1, 2004

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (04-05):

Fire/Rescue:

- Developed Open Burning Permit requirements.
- Implemented the recommendations of the USFA Fire Investigation Study.
- Continued to manage regulatory compliance in fire services.
- Provided continuing support to the Wake County Fire Commission.

- Provided end-user support to maintenance of the new Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) System
- Maintained expanded fire insurance district boundaries.
- Provided inspections for increased construction by the Public School System.
- Identified need for fire service capital improvement planning.
- Continued to implement the 800 MHz radio system.
- Revised Wake County's Fire Protection Ordinance. The State Building Code Council has adopted the International Fire Code as its model fire prevention code. Because of this transition to the International Fire Code and given the need to address local fire protection needs, staff will continue work to revise the County's fire protection ordinance.
- Increased use of portable live fire training props throughout Wake County.
- Developed standardized salary structure for fire service.

Fire Tax District:

- No increase in tax rate.
- Funding for the Wake County Compensation Plan, which adjusts firefighter salaries to meet system-wide minimums.
- \$150,000 for "bulk purchasing" turnout gear.
- Approximately \$274,000 for small capital, defibrillators, and Thermal Imaging cameras.
- Funding to reimburse Wake County for the fire services use of the 800 MHz radio system.

CIP:

- Completed construction of a new Stony Hill Fire Headquarters/EMS Station.
- Made renovations to Fuquay-Varina Fire Stations #1 and #2 to incorporate EMS vehicle bays and sleeping quarters.
- Completed construction documents and awarded construction contracts to address priority categories 1-3 identified in the Heery facility study (life safety, building envelope, and system reliability improvements) at 29 fire facilities.
- Completed the Fire/EMS Capital Facility and Equipment Study.
- Extended rural fire insurance districts from five road miles to six road miles where possible countywide. All fire departments successfully completed the rating process.
- Transitioned to a new computer aided dispatch (CAD) system. The new CAD system provides for the dispatch of the nearest appropriate resource to an emergency.
- Began transition to new 800 MHz radio communications system, which will significantly improve radio interoperability between and among various emergency service agencies.
- Source: WCAB.

2005

County ownership of apparatus introduced, along with bulk purchasing and county specifications for apparatus.

- Pierce Contender pumpers
 - First bulk purchase.
 - Eighteen delivered in 2005.
 - Seven (or more) ordered in 2006.
 - Some municipalities also ordered, outside of bulk purchases.

- Deliveries have included:
 - 2005 models - AFD (E2), BLFD (P122, E251, P258, E361), Fairview (E1, E2), WFD (E113), RFD, SHFD (P264), WWFD (E196), etc.
 - 2006 models - EWFD (E1), KFD (E134), WFFD (E61)
 - 2007 models - Falls (P212), GFD (E1, E3), FVFD (E3), SCFD (E3), ZFD (P94)
 - 2008 models - WFD (E115)
 - 2009 models - Fairview (E3), Falls (T217), FVFD (E5), MFD (P3), WNHFD (E1)
- Ford/Seagrave brush trucks
 - First ordered in 2006.
 - Five departments: AFD, HSFD, MFD, WFFD, ZFD.
- International/KME tankers
 - First delivered in 2006.
 - Deliveries have included:
 - 2005 models – RFD (T157), SCFD (T6), WWFD (T198).
 - 2009 models – GFD (T7), Fairview (T6), RFD (T158).
 - 2013 models – BLFD, WFFD, WFD (T117), WNHFD (T10).
- Spartan MetroStar/Hackney rescues
 - First delivered in 2008.
 - 2008 models - SHFD (R26), HFD (R22), WFD (T11).
- Pierce ladder for Wendell
 - Delivered 2006.

July 1, 2005

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (05-06):

Fire/Rescue:

- Assisted in development of long-range business plan for County Fire Departments
- Served as liaison between the fire service community and the Raleigh/ Wake Emergency Communications Center on issues related to the new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system and provided end-user support to maintenance of the new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System
- Maintained new fire insurance district boundaries, expanded to six miles, as approved by the Fire Commission, Wake County Board of Commissioners, and the North Carolina State Fire Marshal's office.
- Increased workload to meet the demand of increased construction and renovation by the Public School System. Each new public school building requires two fire and electrical inspections each year, as mandated by law.
- Provided terrorism related training for emergency service providers to improve the ability of fire departments to effectively and safely respond to these terrorism-related events.
- Revised Wake County's Fire Protection Ordinance to transition the ordinance to the International Fire Code. The State Building Code Council adopted the International Fire Code as its model fire prevention code.

Fire Tax District:

- Developed Long-Range Business Plan that addresses such capital needs as apparatus and stations, and such operating issues as staffing and fund balance policies. In January 2005, the Fire Commission unanimously recommended the Plan to the Board of Commissioners, which adopted it in February 2005.
- Implemented new 800 MHz radio system.
- Completed implementation of compensation study adjustments for department personnel.
- Funding for 16 additional firefighter FTEs.
- Increase in funding for turnout gear replacement.
- Source: WCAB.

CIP:

- Submitted Long-Range Plan to Board of Commissioners in February 2005, which addressed such capital needs as apparatus replacement and station location
- Transitioned to new 800 MHz radio communications system, which significantly improves radio interoperability between and among various emergency service agencies.
- Developed a financial model to assist committees and Fire Commission with long-range capital planning
- Initiated coverage discussions with the City of Raleigh and Town of Cary; discussions will continue in FY 2006

2006

July 1, 2006

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (06-07):

Fire/Rescue:

- Completed a training plan in support of National Incident Management System implementation.
- Completed a countywide specification for firefighting turnout gear purchase and coordinated a collaborative turnout gear purchase arrangement for the contracting fire departments.
- Initiated quarterly training sessions focusing on identified training needs to improve fire investigation competencies.

Fire Tax District:

- Increased fire service participation in the budget development process— Over 10 departments represented on Budget Committee. Staffing Committee progressed on long-range plan to address staffing needs County-wide.
- Increased funding for staffing resources, including \$200,000 additional funds for volunteer support and cost-shared positions with three municipalities.
- Continued funding for replacement of turnout gear and small capital.
- Developed the first countywide consensus specification for firefighting turnout gear. The City of Raleigh Fire Department partnered with County departments in drafting the specifications.
- Completed the third and final year of the three-year implementation plan for the fire service compensation plan.

- Completed a salary market survey for the fire service compensation plan and revised salary bands based upon survey results and consultant recommendations.
- Recommended a uniform and consistent accidental death and injury insurance plan for all volunteers in all fire departments. This plan equalizes volunteer coverage countywide for accidental death and injuries.

CIP:

- Planned for and funded the next “batch” of pumper/tankers and tankers for FY 2007; Began development specifications for service trucks and watercraft.
- The Commission and staff began analyzing the need for new fire stations in the County’s unincorporated area. During FY 2007, the Commission may consider specific proposals for stations in the Wake Forest service area, and in the service area East of Garner (which is currently not in an ISO rated district).
- Began construction of Phase 2 of the Fire Facilities Assessment Upgrades (the “Heery Project”) to include improvements to emergency preparedness, facility life cycle, code compliance, and accessibility compliance for 14 fire stations.
- Completed a dormitory addition to Rolesville Fire Station.
- Completed reconfiguration of space for dormitories in Garner Fire Station #2.
- Initiated studies and work on parking lot and driveway improvements to 16 fire stations.
- Source: WCAB.

2007

July 1, 2007

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (07-08):

Fire/Rescue:

- Completed second phase of fire apparatus replacement plan; coordinated with Fire Commission’s Apparatus Committee to draft specifications for service trucks and brush trucks.
- Completed a countywide specification for firefighting turnout gear purchase and coordinated a collaborative turnout gear purchase arrangement for the contracting fire departments. The coordinated process included participation by City of Raleigh and Town of Cary Fire Departments.
- Implemented revised firefighter rehabilitation guidelines at Fire/Rescue Training Center to provide improved emergency medical services standby and increased firefighter safety during live fire training drills.
- Provided on-scene technical assistance to Town of Apex Fire Department during response to EQ Industrial Services chemical explosion and fire. Coordinated multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction origin and cause determination for the chemical explosion and fire.
- Developed and implemented quickest-unit response protocol in computer aided dispatch (CAD) system for new section of I-540.
- Development involved active participation and coordination by and between Wake County, City of Raleigh Fire Department, Raleigh/ Wake Emergency Communications Center, Town of Knightdale Fire Department, Eastern Wake Fire Department and Wake New Hope Fire Department.

Fire Tax District:

- Continued implementation of Long-Range Business Plan – Completed countywide purchase specifications for service vehicles; updated countywide purchase specifications for brush vehicles.
- Funded implementation of volunteer duty crews at Fairview and Swift Creek Fire Departments and increased funding for volunteer duty crew at Bay Leaf Fire Department.
- Provided financial support for Feed-the-Firefighter Foundation.

- Updated Fire Commission’s Service Level Goals – The updated goals state that four personnel must arrive on the first arriving unit within prescribed response time goals.
- Increased funding to provide accidental death and dismemberment insurance for all members of contracting fire departments.

CIP:

- Planned for and funded the next “batch” of fire apparatus to include pumper/tankers, tankers, and service trucks for FY 2008;
- The Commission and staff began analyzing the need for new fire stations in the County’s unincorporated area. During FY 2007, the Commission began reviewing specific proposals for stations in the Wake Forest service area, and in the service area East of Garner (which is currently not in an ISO rated district).
- Continued construction of Phase 2 of the Fire Facilities Assessment Upgrades (the “Heery Project”) to include improvements to emergency preparedness, facility life cycle, code compliance, and accessibility compliance for 14 fire stations.
- Began work on parking lot and driveway improvements to 17 fire stations.
- Source: WCAB.

2008

First fire station closed, after multi-year process to evaluate stations for possible closure:¹¹

- Western Wake Station 2 closed, Cary Suburban Fire District created, Cary FD contracted – July 1, 2008.
- Other stations initially identified were Western Wake Station 1, Eastern Wake Station 2, and Wake New Hope Station 1.

July 1, 2008

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (08-09):

Fire/Rescue:

- For the FY08 budget, Fire and Rescue requested, and received funding for a part-time Deputy Fire Marshal position. Two conditions made the request necessary: (a) Fire and Rescue was not in compliance with the state mandated inspection schedule; and (b) Plan review performance was below the performance goal.
- In FY 07, Fire and Rescue identified a total of 869 commercial, one year, two year and three year occupancies that were not in compliance with the inspection schedule. For FY 08 to date, the number has decreased approximately 34% to a total of approximately 568 occupancies not in compliance. Based on FY 08 performance data, fire inspection compliance is predicted to occur in FY 2010.
- Fire and Rescue's plan review performance for FY 08 has improved from approximately 56% of plans completed within seven working days in July, to 95% of plans within seven working days in January 2008. Reduced the percentage of fire cause determinations listed as "Under Investigation" 9%. The reduction is due to improved reporting and fire cause determination practices. By reducing the number of fire causes listed as under investigation, the number of fires with a cause determined increased.
- Investigated approximately 30% more intentionally set fires than in FY 07. The number of intentionally set fires is predicted to increase from 46 in FY 07 to approximately 60 for FY 08. The investigation of intentionally set fires involves a significant amount of more case investigation work to support a criminal prosecution.

¹¹ Station closures are first suggested in 2004 TriData study.

- Coordinated with the General Services Department to complete critical infrastructure repairs at the Fire/Rescue Training Center. The work involved replacement of fire hydrants, repair of underground mains, and replacement of hydrant pressure valves.
- Began delivery of National Incident Management System training courses in a multi-agency, multi jurisdiction format. The format involved fire, police, and EMS personnel from various jurisdictions in Wake County training to prepare for major incident response.
- Completed a needs assessment and feasibility study for a countywide recruit academy. The first academy is planned for FY 2009. The academy will allow volunteer and paid members to attend and attain the training and certifications required by the Fire Service Compensation Plan.
- The Fire Commission approved a recommendation from its Facility Committee to locate a fire station in the Raynor Road area. This site will allow for the extension of fire insurance district boundaries to cover the southeastern part of the County which is not in a rated fire insurance district.
- Staff completed an evaluation and application of the Fire Commission's closure criteria to Western Wake Fire Station #2. Western Wake Station #2 is the first station recommended in the Long Range Business Plan for evaluation. The station is scheduled to close effective July 1, 2008.
- The Fire Commission has not completed the staffing and facility components of the long-range plan. Staff coordinated with the Staffing and Facilities Committees to develop a recommended plan for the Fire Commission's consideration. At its January, 17, 2008 meeting, the Fire Commission did not support the recommendations of the various committees.

Fire Tax District:

- In January 2005, the Fire Commission unanimously recommended the first version of the Wake County Fire Tax District Long-Range Business Plan to the Board of Commissioners, which adopted it in February 2005. In January 2008, the Fire Commission developed and recommended the final components of the plan consisting of facility and staffing.
- The Fire Commission and various committees continued implementation of Long-Range Business Plan. The Apparatus Committee completed countywide purchase specifications for service vehicles, brush vehicles, and pumper-tankers.
- The Compensation Committee has recommended standardization of benefits including fire tax retirement contributions, a longevity program, and countywide group term life insurance plan for all fire department members. The Compensation Committee have continued to discuss other related issues.
- The Facilities Committee has recommended a location for fire station in southeastern Wake County near the Town of Garner. This station will serve the area that is presently not in a rated fire insurance district.

CIP:

- Source: WCAB.

2009

July 1, 2009

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (09-10):

Fire/Rescue:

- For the first time since the Division began plans review, fire prevention achieved the performance goal of reviewing 90% of plans received within seven working days. This achievement improved our level of customer service to those submitting plans for permitting and other purposes.
- Construction on RDU Terminal 2 was completed in FY 09. Plans have been submitted and approved for the South Concourse expansion project (Phase 3). When construction is completed for Phase 3, Terminal 2 will become one of the largest buildings in Wake County. During the course of this 4+ year project, Fire/Rescue staff conducted 307 inspections to ensure code compliance prior to the October, 2008 grand opening.
- The first Wake County Fire Academy Recruit Class graduated January 2009. The academy offers an opportunity for career and volunteer firefighters to complete a nineteen-week program and obtain certifications and training necessary for employment with county fire departments. Twelve graduates of the first class represented eight different fire departments in Wake County.
- Developed a weeklong Basic Fire Investigation School for local fire investigators from Wake County Fire Services, Wake County Sheriff 's Office, Raleigh Fire Department, Cary Fire Department, local contracting fire departments and local law enforcement agencies. Fifty students from throughout Wake County attended the course to improve their skills in fire origin and cause investigations and better share information related to fire investigations in Wake County. Instructors were from North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Wake County District Attorney's Office, and Wake County Fire Services.
- Fiscal Year 2008 was the third year in a row that the Division reached a 100% collection rate for fire incident reports.
- Wake County Board of Commissioners approved the purchase of land on Raynor Road for construction of a fire station to extend fire insurance district boundaries to an area of southeastern Wake County that is not currently in a rated fire insurance district. Wake County and the Town of Garner approved an interlocal agreement that provides the details of the partnership between the County and Town to purchase the land and build and operate the fire station. The site will be a co-location site with facilities to house an Emergency Medical Services ambulance.
- The Wake County Board of Commissioners approved creation of the Cary Suburban Fire Insurance District and authorized an agreement with the Town of Cary Fire Department to serve the unincorporated fire insurance district. The North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal has approved the certification for the Cary Suburban District.
- Fire/Rescue performed 160 fire investigations in FY 2008. This number of fire investigations is a 29% increase from the prior year. Although the number of fire investigations is projected to decrease for FY 09, the FY 09 projection is the second highest number of fire investigations in the last five years.
- Discontinued training services for private fire brigades from outside Wake County. To reduce costs for lp gas used in live fire training, private fire brigades are no longer trained at the County's fire training center.

Fire Tax District:

- In January 2005, the Fire Commission unanimously recommended the first version of the Wake County Fire Tax District Long-Range Business Plan to the Board of Commissioners, which adopted the plan in February 2005. In January 2008, the Fire Commission developed and recommended the final components of the plan consisting of facility and staffing.
- During FY 2009, the Fire Commission began implementing components of the staffing plan based on available funding sources. This includes a total of ten new firefighter positions in the following departments: Garner, Hopkins, Rolesville, Stony Hill, and Wendell. Two additional firefighter positions are funded for FY 2010 but have not yet been placed in departments.
- The Apparatus Committee completed a review of the current apparatus replacement plan examining actual use, condition, and total department/station fleet. Based on this information, some apparatus replacements were delayed saving over \$7.3 million in the seven year replacement schedule. In addition,

the committee completed countywide purchase specifications for tanker apparatus that includes new EPA emissions standards.

- The Compensation Committee completed an evaluation of pay-bands with support of the Wake County Human Resources Department. The revised pay bands were adopted by the Wake County Fire Commission and will become effective July 1, 2009. In prior years, the Compensation Committee had developed a plan for standardized retirement funding among all the contracted departments. In FY 2010, the budget provides to departments a minimum of 9.87 percent funding for retirement and/or 401(k) benefits. These benefits are extended to eligible full-time staff.
- The Turnout Gear Committee was renamed the Equipment Committee and was converted to a standing committee. The Fire Commission recognizes that equipment repair and replacement is likely to become a greater share of future Fire Tax District budgets. The Equipment Committee will develop and oversee the equipment replacement programs such as turnout gear, air bottles, defibrillators, thermal imaging cameras, and breathing apparatus.
- With significant assistance from Facilities, Design and Construction staff, the Fire Facilities Committee has completed the purchase of land for Garner Station #4 and schematic design of the joint Fire/EMS station. The new station will be located on Spaceway Court near Raynor Road and will provide fire services to areas in southeastern Wake County, some of which is outside of a rated insurance district.
- Source: WCAB.

2010

July 1, 2010 – Wake County Fire Academy #3 begins. Graduates in December 2010. Successful candidates get certified as Firefighter II, Haz-Mat Operations Plus, EMT Basic, ICS, Firefighter Rescue, Firefighter Survival, Rescue Technician, and Fit Testing. (Legeros Fire Blog.)

[2010 to present - More Milestones](#)

2010

July 1, 2010

Accomplishments of prior budget year, from Annual Budget (10-11):

Fire Services:

- Coordinated with other county departments and the Town of Garner to begin construction of a new fire/EMS station on Raynor Road in the southeastern area of Wake County. This new station will allow for improved response times for fire and EMS units in a cost effective manner. The new station will also allow Wake County to extend fire insurance district boundaries to cover an area that is not currently in a rated fire insurance district.
- The second Wake County Fire Academy Recruit Class graduated November 2009. This academy offers an opportunity for career and volunteer firefighters to complete a twenty three-week program and obtain certifications and training necessary for employment with county fire departments.
- The first Wake County Fire Academy began September 2008. The academy training program includes certifications and training in the following areas: Firefighter I and II, EMT Basic, Rescue Technician, Hazmat Ops. Plus, ICS, Safety and Survival, Firefighter Rescue and several other topics. The class started

with 14 recruits with 12 graduating November 23, 2009. The recruits represent 7 different fire departments in Wake County.

- The next academy is scheduled to begin July 2010. Completed the second annual basic Wake County Fire Investigation School for local fire and law enforcement personnel. This 7 day course is designed to offer basic techniques in fire cause determination to local fire and law enforcement personnel. Forty-five students representing agencies throughout Wake County attended this course to learn basic techniques in fire cause determinations in Wake County. Based on student evaluations and recommendations, plans are to continue this course annually.
- FY 2009 was the fourth year in a row that the Division reached a 100 percent collection rate for fire incident reports.
- Initiated discussions with the City of Raleigh Fire Department to provide service in unincorporated areas as part of the overall project to evaluate the Fire Commission's fire station closure criteria for four fire stations - Bay Leaf Fire Station #3, Falls Fire Station, Wake-New Hope Fire Station #1, and Western Wake Fire Station 31.
- Coordinated with the Fire Commission and the Fire Commission's Budget Committee to draft a new fire protection agreement planned for July 1, 2010, implementation.
- Fire Services staff assisted Garner Fire Department with coordination of post incident review of the Con Agra explosion and building collapse and delivered lessons learned presentations to various groups. From FY 08 to FY 09, the number of fires listed as "Under Investigation" increased approximately 33% to a total of 32 fire causes listed as "Under Investigation." The number of "Under Investigation" fire caused is projected to increase again in FY 10. Fires listed as "Under Investigation" are fires with an undetermined cause of ignition at the time of the scene investigation and may result in underreporting of intentionally set or accidental fire causes.
- Fire Service personnel assisted in the Emergency Operations Center with the H1N1 vaccination distribution planning.

Fire Tax District:

- In January 2005, the Fire Commission unanimously recommended the first version of the Wake County Fire Tax District Long-Range Business Plan to the Board of Commissioners, which adopted the plan in February 2005. In January 2008, the Fire Commission developed and recommended the final components of the plan consisting of facility and staffing. During FY 2009, the Fire Commission began implementing components of the staffing plan based on available funding sources. This includes a total of ten new firefighter positions were placed in various departments throughout the County.
- Two additional firefighter positions are funded in FY 2010 but was not specified to a particular department. The Fire Commission placed these positions in the Fairview and Fuquay-Varina Fire Departments. In addition, the Town of Fuquay-Varina agreed to fund an additional position creating a total of three positions.
- Also, with the new position funding, Fairview re-organized existing staff and converted part-time positions into additional full-time Driver/Operators. By converting part-time positions, Fairview has been able to improve response time and level of service with minimal investment of fire tax dollars.
- The Wake County Board of Commissioners and Fire Commission approved the contract to build Garner Station #4. The new station will be located on Spaceway Court near Raynor Road and will provide fire services to areas in southeastern Wake County, some of which is outside of a rated insurance district. The station is expected to open in December 2010.
- Source: WCAB.

2011

July 1, 2011

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget (11-12):

Fire Services:

- Completed construction of a new fire/EMS station on Raynor Road in the southeastern area of Wake County. This new station will allow for improved response times for fire and EMS units in a cost-effective manner. The Wake County Board of Commissioners approved the extension of fire insurance district boundaries for the Garner Suburban Fire Insurance District to cover property in southeastern Wake County previously in an unrated area.
- The third Wake County Fire Academy Recruit Class graduated December 2010. This academy offers an opportunity for career and volunteer firefighters to complete a 23 week program and obtain certifications and training necessary for employment with County fire departments. The academy training program includes certifications and training in the following areas: Firefighter I and II, EMT Basic, Rescue Technician, Hazmat Operations. Plus, ICS, Safety and Survival, Firefighter Rescue and several other topics. The class graduated the most recruits in the Academy's three-year history. Ten of the graduates were employed by the Garner Volunteer Fire/Rescue Department to staff the newly opened fire station.
- Continued a 100 percent collection rate for fire incident reports for the fifth straight year. Wake County is one of a few counties statewide to collect and submit fire incident reports from all fire departments in the County.
- Continued discussions with the City of Raleigh Fire Department to provide service in unincorporated areas as part of the overall project to evaluate the Fire Commission's fire station closure criteria for four fire stations - Bay Leaf Fire Station #3, Falls Fire Station, Wake-New Hope Fire Station #1, and Western Wake Fire Station #1.
- Implemented a new fire protection agreement July 1, 2010. The new agreement increased accountability for the contracting fire departments and provides a process for ensuring contract compliance.
- Completed fire inspection activities for Raleigh Durham Airport Terminal 2 Concourse Expansion Project. This project is the largest project in Wake County's jurisdiction. All fire related activities were conducted in a timely manner to support early completion of the expansion.
- Participated in multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction exercises including the Wake County Public School System shooter exercise and the National Disaster Medical System exercise.
- Completed the third annual Advanced Fire Investigation School. Fire experts from the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms assisted in the instruction for fire and law enforcement personnel from across the County.

Fire Tax District:

- In January 2005, the Fire Commission unanimously recommended the first version of the Wake County Fire Tax District Long-Range Business Plan (LRBP) to the Board of Commissioners, which adopted the plan in February 2005. In January 2008, the Fire Commission developed and recommended the supplementary sections to the LRBP including facility and staffing components.
- In FY 2009, the Fire Commission began implementing components of the staffing plan subject to available funding sources and placed ten new entry-level firefighter positions in various departments throughout Wake County. In FY 2010, two more entry-level firefighter positions were added at Fairview and Fuquay-Varina Fire Departments. Fairview Fire Department used the funding for a new position and converted existing part-time positions to create two Driver/Operator positions. The Town of Fuquay-Varina agreed to fund an additional firefighter position. Therefore, the Fire Tax District was able to leverage funding for two positions into the creation of four new positions, improve response time and service levels.

- In FY 2011, the Fire Tax District added a total of 16 new positions. Nine entry-level firefighter positions were distributed to existing fire departments; three positions at Bay Leaf, three at Fairview, and three at Stony Hill Fire Departments.
- The LRBP identified a crucial need to construct and operate a fire station in the southeastern Wake County. Located on Spaceway Court near Raynor Road, Garner Station #4 was completed and opened in November 2010. The station provides fire services to unincorporated areas, some of which was outside of a rated insurance district. The opening of Garner #4 includes the creation of seven new positions needed to provide fire prevention services. As a result of priorities identified in the LRBP and funding availability, the Fire Tax District has been able to create and/or leverage approximately 30 new positions since FY 2008.
- Source: WCAB.

2012

County-driven mergers start, with county manager and staff encouraging private departments to discuss consolidation as a means of reducing operational costs.

- Falls merges with Wake Forest – March 25, 2012. (Or did this merger initiate before suggestions started from County Manager?)

Wake County Association of Fire Chiefs created.

July 1, 2012

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget 02-03:

Fire Services:

- The fourth Wake County Fire Academy Recruit Class graduated February 2, 2012. This academy offers an opportunity for career and volunteer firefighters to complete a twenty Five-week program and obtain certifications and training necessary for employment with county fire departments. The academy training program includes certifications and training in the following areas: Firefighter I and II, EMT Basic, Technical Rescuer, Hazmat Responder, ICS, Safety and Survival, Firefighter Rescue and several other topics. Departments look to this academy for highly trained employees. Garner Fire/Rescue hired 10 of the recruits from academy three. This program also promotes volunteerism as applicants are required to be a member of a fire department.
- Continued a 100 percent collection rate for fire incident reports for the fifth straight year. Wake County is one of a few counties statewide to collect and submit fire incident reports from all fire departments in the County.
- The Department of Fire and Emergency Management staff continues to have discussions as part of the Department's work to evaluate the Fire Commission's criteria for replacing fire protection service in the unincorporated areas of the County. As identified in the Wake County Fire Commission Long Range Business Plan there are four fire stations under consideration. They include Bay Leaf Fire Station #3, Falls Fire Station, Wake New Hope Fire Station #1, and Western Wake Fire Station #1. In July of 2011 the Board of Directors for Wake Forest Fire Department and Falls Fire Department entered into an Operational Consolidation Agreement which authorized and established policies and procedures that would enhance each agencies firefighter programs and emphasize the combined utilization of personnel, training resources, and staffed response apparatus. The full consolidation/merger between Wake Forest Fire Department and Falls Fire Department is anticipated to be completed in Fiscal Year 2013. This service replacement is expected to result in more efficient and effective fire protection service.

- In FY 2010 the County implemented a new Fire Protection Agreement that included language that allowed staff to visit the contracting departments to perform compliance reviews to ensure that fire department operations were conducted in accordance with the contract. The Fire and Emergency Management Department performed a compliance review on the Eastern Wake Fire Department and it was determined that the Department was non-compliant with several areas of the contract. To resolve the non-compliance issues the Eastern Wake Fire Department Board of Directors and the Wake County Board of County Commissioners jointly appointed a Trustee whose primary duties are to oversee disbursements, receipts, budgets, financial transactions and other business for the Eastern Wake Fire Department. Also, the Wake County Board of County Commissioners appointed four (4) members to the Eastern Wake Fire Department Board of Directors.
- Staff is working with members of the Fire Commission on revisions to Wake County's fire protection agreement to strengthen financial and management accountability of the contracting fire departments. New amended contracts will be considered and approved in FY 13.
- Fire Services Training assisted with the Wake County Law Enforcement Adventure Kids Camp sponsored by Wake County Sheriff's Office. 135 kids from 12 to 15 years of age attended the fire training center two full days and experienced live fire demonstrations from fire departments and participated in fire safety education training.
- A Memorandum of Understanding to reconstruct Bay Leaf Station #1 was arranged with the Bay Leaf Fire Department Board of Directors. The County proposed to build this two story station in exchange for the conveyance of Bay Leaf Station #3, located at 1431 Lynn Road to the County.

2013

July 1, 2013

Accomplishments of prior fiscal year, from Annual Budget 03-04:

Fire Services:

- The fifth Wake County Fire Academy Recruit Class is scheduled to graduate June, 2013. This academy offers an opportunity for career and volunteer firefighters to complete a twenty Five-week program and obtain certifications and training necessary for employment with county fire departments. The academy training program includes certifications and training in the following areas: Firefighter I and II, EMT Basic, Technical Rescuer, Hazmat Responder, ICS, Safety and Survival, Firefighter Rescue and several other topics. Departments look to this academy for highly trained employees. This program also promotes volunteerism as applicants are required to be a member of a fire department.
- Continued a 100 percent collection rate for fire incident reports for the fifth straight year. Wake County is one of a few counties statewide to collect and submit fire incident reports from all fire departments in the County.
- Staff is working with members of the Fire Commission on revisions to Wake County's fire protection agreement to strengthen financial and management accountability of the contracting fire departments. New amended contracts will be considered and approved in FY 13.
- Fire Services Training assisted with the Wake County Law Enforcement Adventure Kids Camp sponsored by Wake County Sheriff's Office. 120 kids from 12 to 15 years of age attended the fire training center two full days and experienced live fire demonstrations from fire departments and participated in fire safety education training.

2000s to 2010s – Other Trends

- County-funded renovations and facility improvements at “county” fire stations.
- EMS unit co-locating at select fire stations expands. In prior decade, these were isolated arrangements, and sometimes temporary.
- Wake County Fire Academy program created in 2008.

Other Questions

- What were the trends or specific histories of career members in town and rural/private departments?
- Ditto for paid part-time?
- When did the county fire service contracts start? With the creation of the single fire tax district in 1996?

2014 – Funding Notes

- Wendell is only municipality in Wake County that does not fund its fire department. WFD is funded entirely by county.
- Wake Forest is nearly but not entirely fully funded by the town. However, they are still run as a private corporation.
- Municipalities that serve rural fire districts receive yearly appropriations from the County, for service to those areas.
- Private fire departments that serve municipalities receive both town money (for municipal coverage) and county money (for rural coverage).
- Cary is contracted by Wake County to provide service to Cary Suburban Fire District.
- Raleigh has contracted in the past with private departments, to provide service to newly annexed areas by the city.
 - Partly as a state requirement, which requires a municipality to continue private fire service for a period of time after annexation.

Sources

- MJL/Arcadia – *Raleigh & Wake County Firefighting* books, two volumes by Legeros.
- MJL/WCFD – Wake County Fire Department histories by Mike Legeros, see web site: <http://legeros.com/ralwake/wake/history>
- N&O – News & Observer.
- RT – Raleigh Times.
- WCFA – Wake County Firefighter’s Association.
- WCFC – Wake County Fire Chief’s Council.

- WCAB – Wake County Annual Budget.
- WCFC – Wake County Fire Commission.

Appendix – Fire Marshal/Fire Services Directors/Public Safety Directors

- 1971 - **Russell Capps** appointed Director of Raleigh/Wake Civil Preparedness (as named in 1973 budget doc).
 - Previously county Planning Director since 1969, previously WRAL announcer since 1950.
 - By the late sixties, the unincorporated areas of Wake County had no zoning, except around the airport.
 - Farmers and land owners were apprehensive about zoning, and the county telling them what could be done with their.
 - County hired Capps because he was known through television, and would help the planning office make a better or more likable impression.
 - Source: OH.
 - Position previous held by Colonel John C. Thorne (1960-1971) and Colonel David L. Hardee (1954 to 1960).
 - Office previously named Raleigh/Wake County Civil Defense.
 - Office renamed Raleigh/Wake County Emergency Preparedness by July 1, 1976. (WCAB 76-77)
 - Office renamed Wake County Emergency Management by July 1, 1981. (WCAB 81-82)
 - Position expanded to include second role of Fire Marshal. **When? Present by July 1, 1982.**
 - Position expanded to include second/third role of Wake County EMS director in 1976.
 - Position later changed to Emergency Management director.
 - Serves until 1986.
 - Sources: Capps biography, MJL.
- 1986, early - Capps resigns.
 - Later member of NC General Assembly, 1994 to 2006.
 - Source: WFCCC, Capps biography.
- 1986 – **Rick Hall** hired as first full-time Fire Marshal on February 10, 1986. (Source: N&O/RT)
- 1988 - **Ed Schmelzer** hired Fire Marshal on February 15, 1988.
 - Serves until 1994? (Source: WCFCC)
- 1994 - **Greg Grayson** hired as Fire Marshal. Serves until 1998.
 - Former Deputy Fire Marshal.
 - Source: Grayson biography.
- Fiscal Year 1995-96 - Public Safety Division created.

- **Jimmie B. Holland** (former Asst. County Manager) hired as Director. County Manager's office restructured.
- Four departments (Fire, EMS, EM, CCBI) converted into divisions of Public Safety.
- Vehicle markings changed to reflect.
- After Holland's retirement (circa 2001?), CCBI Director **Tim Lanier** serves as Interim Director.
- 1995 - Fire Marshal position renamed Fire/Rescue Director. (Source: Grayson bio.)
- 1998 - Greyson resigns.
 - Becomes Burlington Fire Chief, later Asheville, later Greensboro. (Source: Grayson Bio)
- 1999 - **Ray Echevarria** (previously Interim Director, previous Deputy Fire Marshal) hired as Fire/Rescue Director.
 - Later named Fire Services Director.
 - Serves until 2001, then 2002 to 2001. (Source: MJL)
- 2000 - **John Rukavina** hired as Director of Public Safety.
 - Previously Asheville Fire Chief since 1986, previously an Interim City Manager and Fire Chief in MO, previously extensive public safety career in MN.
 - Serves until 2008. (Source: LinkedIn)
- 2001 – Echevarria resigns, hired as Apex Fire Chief.
- 2001 – **Dewey Poole** (Deputy Fire Marshal/Director of Training) named Interim Director.
 - Serves until 2002.
- 2002 - Echevarria returns as Fire Rescue Director.
- Fiscal Year 2006-07 – CCBI no longer part of Public Safety Division.
- 2008 - Rukavina resigns.
 - Position is removed.
 - County reorganizes Public Safety Department.
 - Among the changes are Wake County Medical Director Dr. Brent Myers appointed as the administrative director of the Wake County EMS System. (Source: BOC, 8/18/08)
 - Fire Services and Emergency Management are combined into single department in 2009.
 - Department of Fire and Emergency Management.
 - Includes Fire and Rescue Services Division and Emergency Management Division.
 - Echevarria is Director.
- 2011 - Echevarria retires.
 - No director until position filled in 2013.
- 2011 – Deputy County Manager **Joe Durham** becomes Interim Fire Services Director.
- Between July 30, 2011 and July 1, 2012 – Fire and Rescue Services is renamed Fire Services.
- 2013 - **Mike Wright** hired as Fire Services Director.

Appendix – Fire Tax Rates – 1987 to 2003

TWP	DISTRICT	CODE	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988	1987
1	Bayleaf	BAY						.065	.065	.065	.065	.065	.065	.055	.055	.055	.055	.055	.07
2	Durham Highway	DH						.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.05
3	Stony Hill	SH						.10	.10	.10	.10	.10	.095	.07	.07	.07	.10	.10	.08
4	Rolesville	ROL						.07	.07	.07	.07	.07	.07	.065	.065	.065	.065	.065	.08
5	Cary (Yrac)	YRA						.10	.085	.08	.08	.08	.08	.075	.075	.075	.10	.06	.04
6	Raleigh	RAL						.10	.10	.10	.10	.095	.095	.095	.095	.095	.10	.10	.10
7	Wake-New Hope	WH						.10	.075	.075	.075	.075	.075	.065	.08	.08	.08	.08	.06
8	Six Forks (6f)	SF						.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.055	.07	.07	.07	.07	.07
9	Wake Forest (Wakette)	WKT						.085	.085	.075	.075	.075	.065	.05	.07	.07	.07	.07	.07
10	Zebulon (Wakelon)	WLN						.095	.095	.095	.095	.095	.075	.065	.08	.08	.08	.08	.08
11	Morrisville	MOR						.10	.10	.10	.10	.10	.10	.05	.08	.08	.08	.08	.08
12	Swift Creek	SC						.065	.065	.065	.065	.055	.045	.04	.05	.05	.05	.05	.05
13	Knightdale (Alert)	ALT						.10	.085	.08	.08	.08	.07	.06	.07	.07	.07	.07	.05
14	Fairview (Ten-Ten)	T-T						.095	.095	.085	.085	.07	.065	.04	.05	.05	.05	.05	.05
15	Falls	FLS						.10	.10	.10	.10	.10	.095	.075	.10	.10	.10	.10	.10
16	Fuquay Varina (Furina)	FUR						.10	.10	.085	.085	.085	.085	.075	.10	.10	.10	.10	.10
17	Holly Springs	HS						.10	.10	.10	.10	.095	.095	.06	.08	.08	.08	.08	.08
18	Wendell (Holmes)	WEN						.09	.09	.09	.09	.08	.08	.07	.09	.09	.09	.09	.09
19	Fairgrounds	FG						.10	.10	.10	.10	.09	.09	.065	.08	.08	.08	.08	.05
20	Hopkins	HOP						.10	.10	.075	.075	.075	.075	.05	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06
21	Apex (Hipex)	HIP						.10	.10	.10	.10	.10	.085	.085	.095	.095	.095	.095	.075
22	Garner	GAR						.075	.075	.07	.07	.07	.06	.06	.08	.08	.08	.08	
23	Fire Tax District	FTD	.10	.10	.09	.07	.085												

Appendix – Wake County Fire Chiefs Past and Present

Compiled in 2012.

See <http://legeros.com/ralwake/wake/wake-chiefs.pdf>

Appendix - Fire Commission FAQ

Created in 2011.

See <http://www.legeros.com/ralwake/photos/weblog/pivot/entry.php?id=4660> for answers to the questions:

- What is the Wake County Fire Commission?
- Who are the members of the Fire Commission?
- How can you get appointed to the Fire Commission?

- Do the Commissioners factor additional information into their appointment of citizen/consumer members, beyond just the application form? Should I get to know my Commissioner, if I want to apply?
- You said that the Fire Commission makes recommendations to the County Commissioners? I thought the Fire Commission was the governing body for the fire service in Wake County?
- Are the recommendations of the Fire Commission always followed?
- How often does the Fire Commission meet?
- Are the meetings public? Can I attend? Can I stand up and speak?
- Why do you keep saying “county-funded fire departments” instead of just “county fire departments?”
- What about the Fire Commission subcommittee meetings? Are they also public? What about all the other governing bodies?
- How can I get a copy of those meeting schedules?
- Can I get copies of those meeting minutes?
- Do the County Commissioners have control over the fire services in Wake County?
- But because the county contracts with those departments, can the county call the shots in those cases?
- So there’s no Wake County Fire Chief?
- Then who leads the fire service in Wake County?
- Plus the individual fire departments, right?
- What’s the role of the county Fire Marshal and the Fire Services office?
- How many different kinds of fire service contracts are there in Wake County?
- Doesn’t a municipality have to contract with a county fire department if they annex that territory?
- How many municipalities are there in Wake County, by the way? And how many public versus private fire departments?