

## Update #6 / August 31 - Two Alarms on Manor Valley Court

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August 31

This morning's *News & Observer* features [this story by Thomasi McDonald](#), about the YouTube video(s) of Saturday's fire on Manor Valley Court. The particular video is a nearly ten-segment of citizen footage showing operations in the rear (Division C) of the burning apartment. (By my calculations, the footage starts at 6:45:13 p.m.) It's the most-watched of a handful of videos from four different YouTube users, with over 21,600 views as of this writing. It's also been extensively discussed, in YouTube comments, in blog postings, and on Facebook. We learn that the footage was shot by Mike King, who lives in a neighboring building, and who runs the local news site [Raleigh Gazette](#). (His YouTube username was previously Michael Jordan, ergo those citations in prior postings or comments.) The *Gazette* is also [sponsoring a fundraiser](#), to help victims of the fire.

The article talks about the talk about the video, and how viewers have commented on seeming absence of suppression activities. Both King and fire department officials defend the actions of firefighters. Explained are the activities that weren't immediate visible in the video, or to those watching the incident from that vantage point. Crews had entered the structure, to begin fighting the fire, to search for reportedly trapped occupants, and ensure the evacuation of all other residents. The story mentions one woman in a second-floor apartment with two dogs, who didn't want to leave. (Capt. Jake Jakowski of Squad 14 grabbed the dogs and guided the woman out, and just as an explosion started spreading fire across the top of the structure.) [Read the entire News & Observer story.](#)

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### Two Alarms on Manor Valley Court

Photo and media links:

- [Mike Legeros photos](#)
- [Lee Wilson photos](#)
- [Jason Thompsn photos](#)
- [Mike Legeros photos](#) (morning after)
- [Raleigh Gazette](#), raw footage, Div C:  
[Video 1](#) (backdraft at 4:20)  
[Video 2](#)
- Dashawn Shearn, backdraft, div A/D through trees:  
[Video](#)
- cinemabon, Div C  
[Video 1](#)
- [WRAL](#)
- [WTVB](#)
- [WTVB, aftermath](#)
- [WNCN](#)
- [News & Observer](#)
- [News & Observer](#), Aug 31
- [Raleigh Gazette](#)
- [Statter911](#)

[Video 2](#)

- SuperPwnsome, compilation, Div A and more:

[Video](#)

- [Firehouse.com](http://Firehouse.com)
- [FireNews.net](http://FireNews.net)

Narrative:

Two alarms were struck in northwest Raleigh early Saturday evening at 5024 Manor Valley Court. Four-story, wood-frame apartment building with 36,408 square-feet. Thirty apartment units. Dispatched at 6:37:56 p.m. Working fire dispatched at 6:39:47 p.m., due to multiple callers. Heavy fire and through the roof on third floor, in top rear, found on arrival of Engine 17 at 6:42:13 p.m. Battalion 4 arrived at 6:43:18 p.m. and assumed command. Second alarm requested by Battalion 4 at 6:44:39 p.m. [Stuff goes here.<sup>1</sup>]

Crews experienced what has been described as a backdraft, which was captured in video footage as an explosion that shot flames and smoke from the top floor and roof of both ends of the building. That event occurred within minutes into the incident. No firefighters were injured in the explosion. See video links above, or embedded videos below.

Collapse conditions soon observed, and evacuation orders given by Battalion 4 at 6:53:09 p.m. and transmitted by Headquarters at 6:53:23 p.m. Fire traveled the entire roof line. Three aerial streams utilized, two on Summit Manor Lane: Ladder 1 in the A/B corner, and Ladder 3 in the B/C corner. Ladder 2 was located Doie Cope Road on the C/D corner. Engine 17 also deployed a deluge gun on B/C corner. Portable monitors also utilized on the building's three exposed sides.

At least three hydrants utilized, including Engine 16 supplying Ladder 3 from Summit Manor Lane just off Grove Barton Road, Engine 23 supplying Engine 17 (and Ladder 1?) on Summit Manor Lane just above the building, and Engine 18 supplying Ladder 2 on Doie Cope Road, a bit west of Bella Park Trail. Command (by Battalion 4, then by Car 20) and medical monitoring/rehab located above the building, on Summit Manor Lane. Staging on Grove Barton Road, with some apparatus parked on Doie Cope Road. Two additional engines special called.

Declared under control at 8:00 p.m. Two firefighters transported with elevated heart rates due to exertion. (They're okay, we're told.) No injuries to residents. Two dogs died. Thirty apartment units damaged. Crews stayed on scene all night, and overhaul continued into Sunday morning. Cause is undetermined.

First alarm: E17, E23, E16, E18, L3, L1, Squad 14, R1, B4, B5, C420. Working fire: A1, C20, C401. Second alarm: E4, E24, E9, L2, B3. Special called: E13, E10. Also C43, C2, C402, WC1. Medical: EMS6 (first alarm), EMS 35, D4 (working fire), EMS 3, M95, D1, T1 (second alarm). Overnight companies were E20, E22, E7 (10 p.m. to 2 a.m.) and E6, E26, E28 (2 a.m. to 6 a.m.) Coverage included E13 and L7 to Station 17, and E10 to Station 16. Later, E20 to Station 17 and E22 to Station 16. Also Bay Leaf Engine at Station 18, and Durham Highway P1 at Station 24.

<sup>1</sup>What was happening during those first few minutes. Actions include firefighters pulling a line, to begin an interior attacks. Crews responding to the report of trapped occupants. Other firefighters ensuring that all occupants were evacuated. Still other firefighters working on apparatus placement, and laying supply lines from the hydrants. And so on.



*Lee Wilson photo*



*Mike Legeros photo*

#### Earlier Updates

August 31 - Updated times, including corrected dispatch time. Also expanded incident times to the second.

August 27 - Finding more video links. Added all found so far, at the top of this posting. Plus three embeds below. What about the backdraft/explosion and why isn't that referenced in the narrative? Good question. Adding that now.

August 26 - Guess this building's really four stories tall, even if each side only has three stories. Corrected the square footage. Confirmed that the building had thirty units. Fire investigation report released. Updating dispatch time (6:36 p.m. instead of 6:37 p.m.) and fire cause (undetermined).



*Jason Thompson photo*

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The smoke plume from this one was pretty impressive. I could see it clearly from the air while on approach to the Lee County Airport just north of Sanford, probably about 10min after the first units arrived. It looked like an entire block or more was smoking from that far out. Wish I had been able to get a picture.

**RaleighRes** - 08/25/13 - 01:24

The smoke from the fire was visible from I 40 near Chapel Hill RD/Cary Towne Blvd area.

**Marcus** - 08/25/13 - 02:48

Listening to the civilian commentary on one of the other videos, I'm reminded that the fire service shoots itself in the foot by not doing a better job of educating the public on what actually happens at a fire. Ex. It may appear that water isn't getting on the fire because the hoses are actually inside the building, or explaining all of the tasks that need to happen in the first few minutes of being on the fireground.

**Chris** - 08/25/13 - 10:46

I saw comments on FB or Statter where one of RFD's finest lived in those apartments? Has there been anything set up to help them out in their trying time?

**D. McKay** ([Email](#)) - 08/25/13 - 23:46

Someone from RFD needs to go on Statter911.com and lay the smack down on all those KIC's who have dissected the operations of the RFD.

**Truckie** - 08/26/13 - 09:05

A "smack-down" would lower ourselves to their level. An explanation was offered on the Facebook page and there is really no need to engage on the website. I fully believe a true professional firefighter understands the dynamics and variables of this type of incident and that a video(s) alone cannot illustrate the massive evacuation effort that was initially underway at this incident. Gauging the operational soundness and strategies via a "one-sided" video and the measurement of water application from a ladder truck is ludicrous when life safety is paramount. But, hey... everyone is an expert right? These guys did good and safe job in the face a very dynamic situation. For the ones reading this that have been there, you understand what I am saying and that no other explanation is required.

**A.C. Rich** - 08/26/13 - 11:45

What year was the ordinance passed requiring sprinklers for multifamily properties? And do they encompass single family homes with x amount of square feet or larger if the a water source can handle it? Not saying it would have helped that much. This fire appears to be lone gone very very early.

Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill and surrounding areas are vastly changing with so many people from out of state. It takes way more to reach those folks who may have never been exposed to much fire education. We do need more education. Budgets are tight as it is but the education budget must be expanded.

The tax payers need to know our knowledge and experience. Setting up shop at the mall during fire prevention week is great but that should not be not 10% – 50% of what we do.

**Buckwheat** - 08/26/13 - 12:20

Yea, lots of Monday morning QB's on Statter911. As for pub ed on fire dept. ops... Do we think anyone would really pay attention or even care to understand? Look at the comments from firefighters on Statter, these are people who should know better but they still make asinine comments about perceived ops. Think also about how many people don't realize that attic spaces aren't sprinkled. How many people come by the firehouse to tour the truck and tell you that they never realized there was a station there? They are the same ones who will complain that an emergency scene is blocking their route home because they don't know any alternate ways. Sheesh!

**Bob** - 08/26/13 - 13:51

As far as comments about public education, I think we need to visit the sprinkler issue, quickly. If indeed the sprinklers did not activate, for whatever reason, we need to know why. If only one or two on the opposite side of the fire activated, it would mean that others in the building not yet impinged by fire would NOT activate. A comment or two from an evacuee doesn't make it clear. (Depending on if the sprinklers in their area activated, of course.) If the sprinklers didn't keep the fire in check, we need to educate the public about why that didn't happen. (Maintenance issues, lack of water, etc.) If they were functioning however, we need to get that info out, because otherwise, the false rumors about sprinklers, with a lack of info, will become fact by those who choose to believe such rumors.

**Jonny** - 08/26/13 - 15:11

On the topic of public education/outreach, my experience has been that the public really does not understand anything about what we do (EMS/fire/police). Their perception is guided by watching "CSI", "Trauma", or any other portrayal of public safety people on TV. My experience has also been that once someone actually takes the time to show them what it is we really do and how we really do it, then you can see the light bulb come on. That has been a major failure on our part, especially EMS, in the public outreach and helping them to really understand what we do, how we do it, and what the realistic expectations are. Sure, some don't care as they're too worried about what Kanye, Mylie, and Lady Gaga are doing, but the majority would really like to learn. We just have to get the message out to them, that is, the message we want them to get.

**DJ** - 08/26/13 - 17:00

Name: (real name

Remember personal info?