Wake County Fire Departments – Family Tree

1921 Wake Forest (Municipal)

Comprised of black firefighters. Had separate personnel, equipment, facility.

WF #2 (M) 1942

Had separate equipment and later separate facility from town fire dept.

WF Rural, 1956
Wakette Fire District

In 1982, WFFD #2 merged with WFFD, and their fire station was closed. In 1993, the town and the rural fire departments merged and a new non-profit corporation was created.

Mergers

1982

Wake Forest, 1983

*WFFD #2 was phased out in 1979. They answered relatively few calls, and their remaining members were absorbed into the town fire dept.

1996

2000 (for county)

Sta 2 2001

2006

Sta 3 2008

In 2012, the Falls fire station became Wake Forest Station 5.

Sta 5 2012

Sta 4 2016

In 2020, WFFD merged with the town of Wake Forest.

Merger

1984

Falls, 1970

The Falls Community Club house was converted into a fire station that is still used today.

Merger

Six Forks 1956

Impacted by annexations, SFFD moved farther north on Six Forks Road in 1962, and to Lynn Road in 1974.

Originally named Six Forks Road FD

Merger

c1997-98?

In 1976, SFFD members helped organize Six Forks Rescue Squad. Many firefighters were also squad members, and provided medical care on scene in the years and decades before the department joined the county First Responder program.

In 2002, the Six Forks fire station became Bay Leaf Station 3.

Bay Leaf 1961

SHFD helped BLFD organize, which began responding south of the Neuse River.

Sta 2, 1993

1995 (?)

1999

Sta 3, 2002

Merger

Northern Wake 2017

Sta 5 closed 2025

Stony Hill 1958

Originally named Stoney Hill FD

1984

Impacted by annexations and the rapid growth of the city, Durham Highway added new fire stations to the north and west. Shortly before Station 3 opened, Station 1 was closed, and Station 3 was soon renamed Station 1.

1994

Sta 2, 1997

Durham Highway 1964

Sta 2 1976

1986

Station 1 closed c1991

Sta 3 1992

1995-96?

In 2000, Raleigh Station 23 opened at Sta 2 on Pinecrest Road, sharing the facility with DHFD.

1925 Fuquay-Varina (Municipal)

FV Rural, 1954
Furina fire district

Had separate equipment and facilities from town fire dept, but shared personnel.

Merger 1972

Sta 2 1991

1997 (?)

In 1999, the rural fire dept merged with the town.

2001

Sta 3 2003

Garner 1952

St. Mary's Fire District, outside of town

During early years, had separate resources and personnel for calls inside and outside the town limits.

Sta 2, 1975

In 1997, the rural St. Mary's and Panther Branch fire districts were combined into the Garner Suburban Fire District.

Sta 3 1999

2002

Sta 4, 2010

Garner (Municipal) 2025

Sta 5 2024

Merged with town in 2025

Swift Creek 1960

In the 1960s, rural fire depts developed methods of shuttling water, using "quick dump" valves on their tankers and portable "dump tanks." This greatly increased the capacity for pumping water at structure fires in areas not served by hydrants.

1993

2001

In 2012, four regional tanker strike teams were created, to improve the efficiency of requesting and responding with tankers for water supply operations.

Fairview 1963

Ten Ten Fire District

Originally and briefly named Ten Ten FD

1982

Sta 2 1990

Merger 1997

Sta 1 – Old HSRFD
Sta 2 – HSFD

Public Safety split into fire and police, 2006

2003

HSFD also operated EMS services from 1998 to 2010.

Sta 3 2008

Holly Springs Rural, 1971

The installation of municipal water systems in early decades led to the formation of fire departments. Hoses were connected directly to fire hydrants and no pumping engines were required. They were typically carried on hand reels or motor trucks in Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina, Wake Forest, Wendell, and Zebulon.

Holly Springs Public Safety, 1995

Explosive growth in the 1990s resulted in the town creating a public safety department with police (1992) and fire (1995) services.

1921 Zebulon (Municipal)

1987

Merger 2000

Zebulon Rural, 1953
Wakelon Fire District

Had separate equipment from town fire dept, but shared facilities and personnel.

1999

Wendell (Municipal) 1908-12

Wendell's first fire department was organized between 1908 and 1912.

Wendell Rural, 1957
Wendell-Holmes Fire District

Had separate equipment from town fire dept, but shared facilities and personnel.

Merger 1985

Sta 2 1988

Around 1990, WFD added a haz-mat team that operated until 2007.

1999

Sta 3 2021

In 2002, the town created a fire department, as a part of a new Public Safety division, and with help from KFD members.

Knightdale PS, 2002

Public Safety split into fire and police, 2012

Sta 3 2020

Sta 4 2024

Knightdale, 1954
Alert Fire District, outside of town

In 1960, split into town and rural sections that shared facilities, equipment, and personnel. This ended after 1985.

1992

Sta 2, 1995

1997

1999

Renamed **Eastern Wake, 2003**

Merger

Wake-New Hope, 1956

From 1989 to 1991, WNHFD operated a dive team. After sponsorship ended, members formed Wake Underwater Search and Recovery Inc.

1974

1985

Sta 2 1988

Wake County has continued to see rapid residential growth in unincorporated areas.

Station 1 closed as a means to enhance service to the response area, with the city contracted to respond from its five surrounding and often closer stations, and the fully staffed New Hope engine company moved to Station 2, to become the county's first dual-company fire station.

Station 1 Closed, 2022

Decades earlier, the business section of Rolesville was destroyed by fire in 1913. Similar major fires destroyed downtown areas of Apex (1911), Fuquay Springs (1919), Fuquay-Varina (1946), and Wendell (1925).

Rolesville, 1958

2007

Rolesville (Municipal) 2025

Merged with town in 2025

Hopkins 1977

Hopkins' first fire truck was a retired 1957 pumper from Raleigh. Rural fire depts often started with hand-me-down or homemade equipment, as well as the donated time and efforts of members, for building facilities, furnishing apparatus, and other needs.

1927 Apex (Municipal)

In 1952, a rural fire dept was organized and soon operated as a unified FD with both town and rural resources.

Sta 3 2002

Sta 4 2007

Apex EMS was part of AFD from 2010 to 2011.

Sta 5 2017

Sta 6 2024

Apex Rural 1952
Hipex Fire District

In 1961, the rural fire dept was split into two entities. By the 1980s, the rural department was again operating as a unified Apex FD.

1961

1989

1994

1997

Sta 2 1997

Merger

In 2002, Apex Rural FD merged with the town.

In 2004, AFD joined NC USAR Task Force 4. Morrisville FD joined in 2006. The team was disbanded in 2013, but AFD remained a state swift-water rescue resource.

Morrisville Rural 1955

The Carpenter substation increased the MFD district from 10 to 25 square miles.

1983

Sta 2 1975

1993

Morrisville Municipal, 1991

Merger 1994

Sta 3, 1999

In 2006, MFD Sta 3 (renumbered from Sta 2) relocated next door to CFD Station 7.

In 1988, MRFD hired its first firefighters. The town paid 50% of salaries. In 1991, the Fire Chief was hired by the town as a career employee, and all of the paid part-time firefighters became town employees, with MRFD paying 50% of their salaries. In December 1994, MRFD merged with the town.

1922, Cary (Municipal)

In 1971, Cary Area Rescue Squad as formed, and began providing area rescue services.

Sta 2 1976

In 1982, Cary became the county's third career fire dept as the volunteers were phased out.

Sta 3 1987

Sta 4 1988

1989

Cary also operated a haz-mat unit from c1986 to 1990.

Sta 5 1996

Sta 6 2001

Sta 7 2006

Sta 8 2013

Sta 9 2015

In 1960, the rural fire dept was split into two entities.

In 1954, CFD was incorporated as a rural fire dept.

1955

Renamed **Yrac, 1961**

Yrac fire district

Station 2 closed as a cost-savings measure initiated by the county, and a new Cary Suburban fire district was created, with contract protection from CFD.

Station 2 Closed, 2008

Cary Rural, 1954

Western Boulevard, 1957 to 1960

After most of their district was annexed by the city in 1960, the fire station closed and WBFD members reorganized as Fairgrounds FD at a new location.

Fairgrounds, 1961

Originally named Fairground FD.

From the mid-1960s to 2005, an annual fire brigade operated during the State Fair. Local firefighters were hired to provide fire protection and conduct safety checks. They borrowed apparatus from local fire depts and dealers, and stayed on site in temporary quarters.

1986

From 1994-95 until after 2003, FFD and then WWFD operated a county-supplied rehab unit.

Merger

Western Wake, 1998

Sta 1 – Fairgrounds Station
Sta 2 – Yrac Station

In 2003, the first local USAR team was created, NC Task Force 7 with Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill, and Cary fire depts.

The city and county fire depts have a long history of working together, from joint training to mutual aid. As residency requirements were relaxed in 1969 and later, some city firefighters moved to rural areas, and joined the volunteer fire depts in Wake and surrounding counties.

1819, Raleigh

Sta 7, 8, 9 | Sta 10, 11, 12, 14, 15 | Sta 16 | Sta 17 | Sta 18, 19, 20 | Sta 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 | Sta 28 | Sta 29

1953

1980

The first fire company in Raleigh was organized in 1819. The volunteer fire department was organized in 1852. The career fire department was created in 1912.

1941, Raleigh-Durham Airport

Army air base until 1943.

Dry-chemical crash truck added 1969.

ARFF crash trucks added c1970, 1973.

1976

Third ARFF crash truck added, 2000

ARFF pumper added, 2019

Fire protection at the airport was provided by part-time firefighters for decades. The career fire department was created in 1977.

Forest Service

Apex tower moved to Penny Road, 1951

Bay Leaf tower moved to Howard Road, 1968

Knightdale tower* removed, 1972

Apex tower closed, 1981

Bay Leaf tower closed, 1985

Apex tower sold, 1986, later removed

*Knightdale's tower was later relocated to Pasquotank Co.

Forest Service fire protection over the decades included three fire lookout towers in Wake County.

Fire towers at
Bay Leaf – Erected 1937
Knightdale – Erected 1938
Apex – Erected 1940

1953 – First rescue squad organized by Raleigh FD. Two years later, Cary FD adds reserve services. Vol. rescue squads in county begin organizing in the early 1960s.

1956, circa – Rural fire dept program created, administered by county office of Civil Defense.

1958 – County-wide radio network installed for rural fire depts.

1960 – First tax district created, to augment funding for rural fire depts.

1960 – Rural Fire Districts Board created.

1963 – County fire chiefs council created.

1972 – City/county communications center created. Rural fire depts are no longer dispatched by Raleigh FD.

1974 – Hydraulic Hurst tools expand rescue capabilities in city and some county fire dept.

1980s – More county fire depts add rescue services, taken over from volunteer rescue squads.

1984 – First responder programs started in county.

1984 – First haz-mat unit in county, Raleigh FD.

1985 – County fire training center completed.

1986 – Full-time fire marshal position created.

1990s – Paid and career firefighters become increasingly common, as fire depts face rising call volumes and decreasing availability of volunteers.

1998 – County fire commission created.

1999 – Fire tax districts consolidated into single county-wide district.

2000s – County ownership of facilities and apparatus introduced.

2000s – Co-location of EMS units begins at county and Cary fire stations.

2005 – New 800mHz radio system, adds greater interoperability between city/county/state agencies.

2008 – First county fire academy.

1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010 2020

Aerial apparatus added
Rescue services added
First responder services added

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Created by Mike Legeros