

## Raleigh/Wake County Ambulance Accidents

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Notable/unusual ambulance or rescue squad accidents or incidents

**October 21, 1939** – Lightner Funeral Home and Raleigh Funeral Home ambulances collide at intersection of Cabarrus and Blount streets. They are responding to a reported stabbing, which was later reported as fatal. The ambulances didn't hear each other, over each other's sirens. One ambulance driver was seriously injured, another died of injuries. Two other people on the scene were injured, and a third car was damaged. (The Afro-American, 10/21/39)

**December 6, 1952** – Ambulance collides with car in front of Warren's Restaurant at Martin and Dawson streets. Car is pushed into doorway of eatery, where about 60 people are dining. Five people are hurt, including critical injuries to the driver of the car. His two passengers are badly cut, and the two ambulance attendants are injured. The ambulance was responding to an emergency call. (News and Courier, 12/7/52)

\_\_\_\_\_, **1975** – Garner Rescue Squad medical responder unit overturns in field on Old Stage Road, while driven by squad chief. The former CP&L equipment truck was built/equipped by members that year, during the squad's formation. The vehicle is destroyed. (Legeros GRS history.)

**April 20, 1978** – EMS ambulance collides with automobile at Salisbury and Hunter streets. Occurs about 5:10 p.m. on a Thursday. Ambulance is answering an emergency call. Occupants of automobile, two men, are transported and treated at Wake Medical Center for their injuries. (N&O, 4/21/78)

**November 27, 1985** – EMS ambulance overturns on New Bern Avenue about 7:00 p.m., traveling east and after swerving to avoid a pickup truck that "had made a U-turn into its path." The \$35,000 ambulance, which was placed in service "a little more than a week ago," overturned three times as it cross the median and "came to rest on its side." The two paramedics aboard were treated and released at Wake Medical Center with minor injuries. The driver of the pick-up truck was not injured, and "charged with a safe movement violation." The ambulance was carrying about \$15,000 worth of equipment. It was responding to a call at the Tower Shopping Center at the time of the accident. The ambulance had 1,050 miles on the odometer. (N&O, 11/30/85)

**May 26, 1987** – Vehicle strikes EMS Station 1. Young woman is driving north on McDowell Street and loses control of her 1980 Chevrolet. Her automobile struck the building and she was injured. (RT, 5/27/87)

**January 1991** – Two Wake County EMS ambulances are out of service, due to recent accidents. (WCEMS News)

**November 29, 1991** – Wendell Rescue Squad building burns. Blaze reported on Friday night about 9:00 p.m. Building was unoccupied when the fire started. Cause suspected as pot left on stove, when volunteer left the building to respond to a motor-vehicle accident with injuries. Passing motorist saw the smoke and reported the fire. The metal building was seventeen years old. Two ambulances had responded to the accident. Two other remaining emergency vehicles were removed from the burning building, when a squad member heard the fire call, and went to the building and removed them from the bay. Fire damaged the kitchen, office, meeting area, front bedrooms, and a storage area. Damage over \$100,000. (Legeros WRS history.)

**February 8, 1993** - EMS 9 involved in accident on Highway 55 in Holly Springs. Unit is returning to ambulance base after transport to a local hospital. While traveling south, an impaired driver runs a stop sign and strikes the ambulance in the driver's door. This causes the ambulance to overturn. Both EMS employees receive injuries, and are held upside-down in their seats by the seat belts. Despite their disorientation and own unknown injuries, they immediately begin assisting the occupants of the other vehicles. One receives critical injuries, another serious, and the third minor.

Patricia Griffin and Randall Moore are later nominated for the county's quarterly Caring, Service, and Respective Customers award. Ignoring their own painful injuries, notes the nomination form, they devote all their attention to the other more serious injured people. "This is commitment to service excellence" notes EMS Operations Officer Linwood Barham, who submits the nomination.

They are recognized on March 10, 1993, by the County Manager. They are presented with special pins, and an exception to the uniform policy was made, so they can wear the pins as part of their EMS uniform. EMS 99 is removed from service due to the damage, and is declared a total loss. (WCEMS News)

**December 1993** – Mid South ambulance crashes while attempting to access I-40 from Highway 70 in Garner. Believe patient died. Need more details. (OH)

**March 1, 1994** – Meat truck fails to stop at stop sign, and collides with Wake EMS ambulance at Milbrook Road and Falls of Neuse Road. The ambulance is responding to an emergency call when struck at 8:10 a.m. The truck strikes the ambulance, which causes both vehicles to veer and strike other cars. Four vehicles involved. Three people are treated and transported, including an EMS member, who suffers a leg injury. The ambulance is a total loss. (N&O, 3/2/94)

**February 9, 1995** – Mid South ambulance stops at minor traffic accident on I-40, while traveling to Chapel Hill to pick up patient. A tractor-trailer truck had rear-ended a car, which was pushed into a van. EMT Michael R. Jackson stepped in front of the ambulance while he was retrieving warning markers when the tractor-trailer truck rolled down an incline and into the lane where the ambulance was parked. It struck the ambulance, and both vehicles ran over Jackson, killing him instantly. (NEMSMS)

**February 14, 1997** – Wake County EMS 7 overturns at intersection of New Bern Avenue and Peartree Lane, after struck by a four-door sedan that runs a stop sign on Peartree. The ambulance was headed outbound on New Bern Avenue to WakeMed, with no patient on board and not answering a call. The ambulance struck the median curb, became airborne, turned over, and landed in the opposite inbound

lane on the driver's side. Both EMS personnel were transported, no serious injuries. Four injuries in the other vehicle, classified as traumas, and required extrication by the fire department. (OH)

**August 6, 1997** – Rolesville EMS ambulance rear-ended on Highway 96, while returning from call. Two EMS members suffer neck and back injuries. Driver of second vehicle later charged with DUI. (N&O 8/10/97)

**August 3, 2000** – Wake County EMS (?) ambulance crashes into a car on US 1 near Calvary Drive, killing the car's three occupants. The ambulance was transporting a Wake Forest police officer who had been wounded in a shooting. Also aboard was the officer's supervisor. The ambulance was traveling "cold". The car ran a red light, while turning onto US.1, and it was "impossible" for the ambulance to avoid the collision. Two people died on scene, and the third overnight. Those in the ambulance were not injured. The officer had been summoned to a domestic disturbance between a man and a woman at a gas station. When he arrived, the man fatally shot the woman, and the ricocheting shot struck the officer in the hand. (Spokesman-Review, 8/8/00; Star-News, 8/8/00; WRAL, 8/5/00).

**March-April, 2001** – Wake County school bus strikes EMS Station 3 on Six Forks Road. It collides with the rear of the building and continues inside to the bathroom. No personnel are injured, and the building is promptly repaired, with a port-a-john installed outside during the work. (WCEMS News)

**November 28, 2005** – Tri-Star Medical Transport ambulance is traveling westbound on the Beltline at Western Boulevard, when a vehicle merging onto the freeway collided with the ambulance's left side. The ambulance left the roadway, struck a guardrail, and overturned down an embankment. The ambulance driver was transported and later reported in fair condition. There was no patient aboard. (WRAL, 11/28/05)

**December 6, 2005** – Patient steals ambulance, after Wake EMS unit arrives for seizure at convenience store at 1300 E. Millbrook Road. He became combative and jumped into the idling unit and locked the door. He turned onto Millbrook Road, drove south on Falls of Neuse, jumped a curb near Bland Road, and crashed into an embankment before coming airborne. He died from injuries, and wasn't wearing a seat belt. The ambulance was totaled. (WRAL, 12/7/05)

**August 22, 2006** – Car strikes Wake EMS ambulance at the intersection of Millbrook Road and Falls of Neuse Road. The ambulance was traveling "hot" on Millbrook when it was struck by a 1999 Pontiac on Falls of Neuse. The 1:43 p.m. accident sends two people, including the driver of the ambulance, to the hospital. The collision caused three other vehicles to wreck. The driver of the car is charged. A police officer witnessed the accident. (N&O, 8/23/06)

**August 29, 2008** – Cary EMS ambulance is struck by a sport-utility vehicle, driven by a sixteen year-old with autism who had taken his father's vehicle for a joyride. He accidentally dragged his father, then struck some mailboxes, garages, cars, and a Cary ambulance that was returning to the station. (WNCN, 9/1/08)

**April 24, 2010** – Wake EMS unit and Raleigh Police cruiser collide while responding to attempted robbery on Brasswood Avenue at approximately 1:00 a.m. Vehicles collide at intersection of Creech Road and Slippery Elm Drive, blocks away from the destination. Both vehicles had emergency lights

and sirens activated at the time of impact. The occupants of the cruiser and ambulance complain of soreness, but do not have major injuries. (WRAL, WTVD.)

**September 18, 2011** – EMS 14 overturns in 7400 block of Fayetteville Road, south of Garner. The paramedic unit is traveling southbound, returning from a hospital, when it swerves to avoid a second vehicle swerving in and out of traffic. The ambulance leaves the roadway, strikes a ditch, and turns over on its side. The two EMS members aboard are transported to WakeMed with minor injuries. Fairview and Garner fire departments respond, along with Wake County EMS units. (Legeros Fire Blog.)

**December 29, 2011** - EMS 3 catches fire at its station at [5305 Six Forks Road](#). The paramedic ambulance had just returned from a call a couple minutes earlier. The two Wake County EMS members find their ambulance in flames after hearing noises coming from the apparatus bay. They evacuate the building safely.

By the time Engine 9 arrives, the engine compartment is fully-involved and the bay ceiling is also burning. The engine catches its own hydrant across the street. Engine 4 was second due, and assists with the water supply. Within minutes, four engines, two ladders, and Battalion 1 re on scene. Other EMS resources and EMS command staff re quickly on scene as well. The fire is quickly contained, though extensive overhaul is required on the roof.

The call was dispatched at 12:42 p.m. and controlled at 12:58 p.m. Six Forks Road was closed in both directions for over an hour. Fire investigators determined the origin of the fire as the engine compartment of the ambulance, caused by unspecified mechanical problem. EMS personnel removed computers, supplies, and other materials from the living area of the station. The facility is closed, though EMS 3 was soon back in service with a spare unit. Both it and the second unit assigned to the station have been relocated to alternate locations.

The loss of the 2010 Chevrolet McCoy-Miller ambulance and its contents were estimated at over \$200,000. The building was closed, and repairs were conducted over six months. It reopened on June 12, 2012.

Repairs and renovations included a complete reconstruction of the interior of the apparatus bay, including a new roof, new electrical components, and a new ventilation system. The crew quarters received new carpet and floor. Some remaining electrical items will be installed this week, including new lighting in the bay and on the outside of the building. The bay was repainted, and some exterior cracks in the building were also repaired. (MJL)