

Town of Apex Public Safety History

Public safety has taken many forms in Apex's history. Once primarily comprised of volunteers, the Town's fire and police services are now provided by paid departments, accounting for nearly 20% of the Town's operating budget each year.



APEX POLICE DEPARTMENT

In 1873, with the formal incorporation of Apex, the town appointed W. F. Utley as the first Town Marshal. He was charged with promoting justice, peace, and safety in the Apex jurisdiction. L. P. Olive was the first Police Chief, and began working for Apex in 1905. The department has experienced tremendous growth from its beginnings, moving from all volunteer officers under the direction of a paid Chief to now nearly 100 sworn police officer positions in the department.

The department has also enhanced their services to the public through the addition of a Community Policing Unit, a Special Response Team, and a Traffic Unit. Additionally, it has become more involved in task forces like the North Carolina Information Sharing and Analysis Center and Internet Crimes Against Children. In 2014, the Apex Police Department received Advanced Accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, a program that has become the primary method for an agency to voluntarily demonstrate their commitment to excellence in law enforcement.

The department started from humble beginnings, with a small office space for police at the old Town Hall on Salem Street. In 2000, the department moved into the Town Hall building then located on Saunders Street. Now in their current building at 205 Saunders Street, the Apex Police Department occupies a 34,000 square foot modern police facility, with substations in other areas of town.

APEX FIRE DEPARTMENT

Before the late 1930s, there was no 'official' fire department. Fire protection services consisted of anyone who came to help after hearing the fire alarm sound. The Town owned an American LaFrance fire truck and parked it outside of the old Town Hall on Salem Street, but the truck often had to be towed to a fire scene. By 1938, many residents had increasing concern over the lack of organized fire protection. In response, nineteen men chartered the Apex Volunteer Fire Department in 1939. The first fire apparatus was a \$35 dump truck that was remodeled to become a hose truck. In 1954, the Apex Fire Department volunteers completed construction of a three-bay brick firehouse in downtown Apex, which is part of Station 1 today.

As the town grew, so did the need for increased fire services. In 1990, the Town created four paid positions - Captain, driver (Engineer), and two Firefighters. These four staff members worked during the week since most of the volunteers had day jobs. In 2002, the Apex Volunteer Fire Department merged with the Town of Apex, which had then expanded paid personnel to a Chief and 12 Firefighters.

The Fire Department offered the first cadet academy in 2009, and since has offered two additional cadet programs. Cadets are offered paid positions while they train to receive certifications in Firefighter I & II, basic EMT, and more.

Fire Stations have now been built in six areas of town to meet the needs of our growing community. In 2021, the Apex Fire Department received a Class 1 Fire Protection Classification, which placed the department in the highest rating category available and with the top 1% of fire departments in the nation for Public Protection Classification.



RESCUE SQUAD / EMERGENCY SERVICES

In 1971, the Apex Volunteer Rescue Squad was founded by thirteen members of the Apex Jaycees. The Rescue Squad used a donated 1956 Pontiac ambulance, and then a donated 1972 Chevy van, to answer calls. In their first year, the group answered 167 emergency calls. By 1977, the Rescue Squad was ready to hire the first full-time staff and received new tools to aid in rescue like the jaws of life, which expanded their capabilities in extrication and technical rescue.

Twenty years later in 1997, the Rescue Squad changed their name to Apex Emergency Medical Service, Inc. (Apex EMS) after rescue duties were transferred to the Apex Fire Department. By this time, Apex EMS was providing paramedic-level service to the community.

In 2010, Apex EMS merged with the Town of Apex, initially as part of the fire department, and, in 2011, became a separate town department. In 2018, Apex EMS ended operations as a municipal-based department, and Wake County EMS began providing service in Apex.

