# Technology Upgrades Increase Efficiency for County Fire Rescue

*Adams County Fire Rescue improves their client and datacenter solutions, keeping all of their employees connected.*

*Source: Adams County Fire Rescue https://www.acfpd.org/photo-gallery.html*

**"Fire and rescue services across the nation look to technology for the safety of citizens and responders. Advancements in technology are not limited to keeping software and laptops updated; they are evident in training, in the daily running of departments, and in numerous areas that make jobs efficient and safe."**

Chief Mark Messinger
Overland Park Kansas
Fire Department

# County Fire Rescue has Ally in Technology

Neighborhood fire stations have evolved from horse-drawn fire brigades to full rescue services. Today's responsibilities still include fighting fires, but also posting evacuation notices, bio-terrorism alerts, boil water notices, and missing child reports for their respective locations.

"In the old days, volunteers just fought fires out of the goodness of their heart," says George Ditolla Jr., retired fire chief of Southwest Adams County Fire Rescue. "They didn't have all the good fancy equipment we have now, but they made it work."

Founded in 1946, Colorado's Adams County Fire Rescue (ACFR) is dedicated to providing quality, timely, and professional emergency services to those who live, work, and drive through their district. With numerous highways and a mixture of residential, commercial, and agriculture areas, ACFR has the potential of receiving very serious calls at any time which they are prepared to handle.

One recent occurrence happened in a matter of moments:

> At approximately 5:44 p.m. on Thursday April 19, Adams County Fire Rescue was dispatched to the 1800 block of Nueva Vista Dr. when a passerby called 9-1-1 to report a structure fire. The first unit arrived at 5:48 p.m. and saw a duplex structure with smoke and flames coming from the front of the building. Firefighters began to simultaneously fight the fire and look for people inside. Because the residents of the duplex were not home, firefighters continued to fight the fire. Crews knocked down the fire at approximately 5:58 p.m.

Firefighters were able to contain the fire to one bedroom, approximately 10% of the duplex, saving the homeowner approximately $255,000. The cause and origin of the fire are under investigation. There were no injuries to firefighters. A total of six units and 23 firefighters from Adams County Fire Rescue responded to the incident. Federal Heights Fire, North Metro Fire, and Thornton Fire assisted with an additional three units and 6 firefighters. Adams County Sheriffs, Adams County Building Inspections, and the American Red Cross also assisted with the incident. The duplex did not have working smoke alarms.

Fire training is an everyday occurrence that helps the firefighters of Adams County be prepared for anything such as fire suppression, search and rescue, and hazardous materials, just to name a few.

## Improving Response Efficiency

The technological advancements are making a difference every day. These advancements include Infrared thermography measuring areas inaccessible or hazardous for other methods, and firefighter tracking telemetry. Even inspection services have experienced breakthroughs, with inspectors regularly using software to track inspections, obtain electronic signatures, and print inspection and business premise reports based on code violations.

As part of the everyday life of many fire and rescue services, advanced technologies allow for the sending and receiving of images with tablets, smartphones, and digital cameras. With whatever technology is available, the goals for fire and rescue have always been the same: save lives and limit damage to property.



*Source: Adams County Fire Rescue Twitter*
*https://twitter.com/adamscountyfire*

"The growth and advancements in emergency response alone in just the past 10 years have shown great progress in nearly every category from the perspective of life safety," says Chief Mark Messinger of Overland Park Kansas Fire Department. "Fire and rescue services across the nation look to technology for the safety of citizens and responders. Advancements in technology are not limited to keeping software and laptops updated; they are evident in training, in the daily running of departments, and in numerous areas that make jobs efficient and safe."

**Improving IT Solutions for Adams County Fire Rescue Means:**

• Improved production and greater accessibility to resources for all employees.

• New servers and storage virtualization solutions have kept ACFR up and running with higher uptime.

# Worthy Investment

As one of Colorado's 64 counties, Adams is located about an hour east of Denver. Needing an updated system in their five fire stations, the County called on the Information Technology department to come up with a plan. IT Manager Aaron Marquez and his team were up for the challenge, looking to make an effective upgrade for their fire rescue units, as well as a worthy long-term investment.

"We respond to approximately 7,300 emergency calls annually from five fire stations utilizing three fire engines, two ladder trucks, one heavy rescue, and four advanced life-support medic units," says Aaron. "Our district covers approximately 19 square miles of unincorporated Adams County and a small portion of the City of Arvada. We serve approximately 65,000 residents and a large daytime influx of commuters and workers. Our response area is surrounded by the cities of Denver, Thornton, Westminster, Federal Heights, and Arvada."



*Source: Adams County Fire Rescue*
*https://www.acfpd.org/photo-gallery.html*

In the heart of the district lies the intersection of Interstates 25; 270; 76 and US Highway 36, and Colorado Highway 224. ACFR is committed to the citizens and the community service needs that arise. ACFR personnel are required to have a minimum certification of Firefighter 1, EMT-B, and HAZMAT OPS. To support their certified personnel, the ACFR has four engines; four medic units; two ladder trucks; one heavy rescue; two brush trucks; and one command vehicle.

# Deliver on Value and Quality

Specializing in enterprise data storage and virtual infrastructure, Davenport Group is an end-to-end solutions provider serving mid-market customers nationwide. Therefore, with an eye on municipal government finances and their own organization's long-term goals, ACFR worked with Davenport Group to support their team in being successful at saving lives and limiting damage to property.

"Now with All-In-One desktops at work stations for firefighter use, their system, software, and servers have been tailored to "speak" the language of their industry. Since they are emergency services we need high uptime, plenty of storage, and availability to network resources," says Aaron. "ACFR is now able to offer personnel and the community access to resources and information pretty much 24/7."

Having worked in IT for the last 14 years, Aaron knows what to look for in IT upgrades: "Make sure you take a look at your needs and abilities. Then you can set your expectations appropriately.  Davenport Group does a good job in giving feedback to what they think is best for our organization and what is also good for us financially."