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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DeKalb Fire Rapid Response Vehicle Fleet Expands

DECATUR, Ga. – The DeKalb County Fire Rescue Department (DCFR) has added two new rapid response vehicles, expanding the total number of units to five. The additional vehicles are in service at Station 20 (Panthersville) and Station 21 (Dunwoody) and respond to emergency medical and fire suppression calls.



DeKalb County added a rapid response vehicle at Station 21 which serves Dunwoody and surrounding areas.

“DeKalb County has structured a strong countywide ambulance transport service system,” said DeKalb County CEO Michael Thurmond. “Our firefighters are often the first on the scene and the most critical point of emergency response is how quickly first responders can initiate lifesaving care and stabilize patients.”

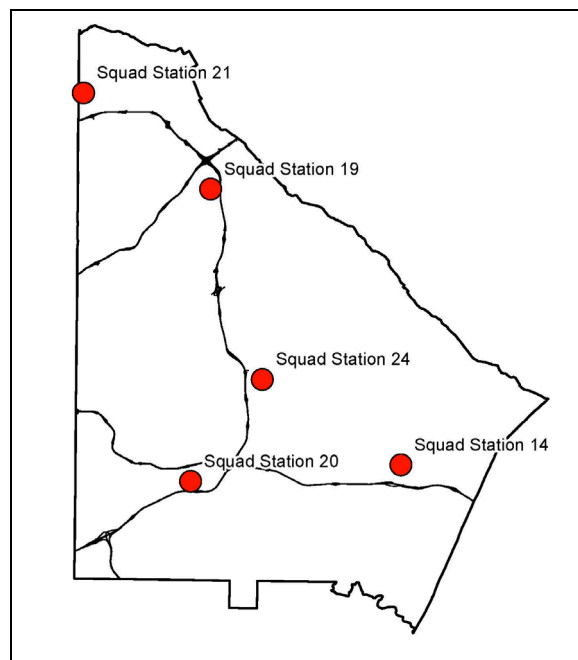
DeKalb implements the “First-on-the-Scene Model of Care,” a new strategy that utilizes medically trained fire personnel who work in concert with the emergency response vendor.

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DeKalb firefighters who are licensed Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) or paramedics are frequently the first to respond to a medical emergency until an ambulance arrives. Rapid response vehicles are staffed by two DeKalb firefighters trained to stabilize patients including treating conditions that require immediate life-saving actions such as major bleeding.

Rapid response vehicles are smaller and less expensive to operate than larger fire trucks. The units feature fire extinguishing capabilities as well as various emergency response equipment and medical supplies. In many cases, rapid response vehicles alleviate an ambulance from having to respond if the patient does not need treatment and/or transport.



DeKalb County rapid response vehicles are strategically located throughout the county.

The county purchased 10 rapid response vehicles from funding generated by the special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) passed in 2017. A total of \$2 million in SPLOST funding was allocated for the 10 response units. Each vehicle cost approximately \$200,000, which includes the truck, upgrades and equipment.

DeKalb has also made additional investments to enhance countywide emergency response. In July 2019, the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners approved CEO Thurmond's budget, which included approximately \$576,000 in funding for 20 paramedic positions to staff three DCFR ambulance units.

The rapid response vehicles and the emergency response investments are part of the county's fully integrated system designed to ensure that trained personnel and equipment are on the scene as quickly as possible.

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