

Bonita Springs Fire District: Our History

Located in Southwest Florida along the beaches of the Gulf of Mexico, Bonita Springs makes up the southernmost edge of Lee County. Each year, Bonita Springs attracts increasing numbers of tourists and year-round residents. With over one hundred miles of shorelines, the steady growth of residential developments, restaurants, shopping centers, and increasing job opportunities, fire and rescue service demands have increased. The Bonita Springs Fire Control and Rescue District protects 72 square miles of land with an estimated 47,000 permanent residents, increasing to approximately 85,000 residents in-season.

On October 2, 1950, the Bonita Springs Volunteer Fire Department was formed. It was a Volunteer Department until May 31, 1965. Early on, the volunteers and auxiliary raised funds to operate the Fire Department by holding barbecue's, a Minstrel Show, a "Firemen's Ball", and a door-to-door campaign asking for membership donations of \$5.00 per household, per year.

On May 31, 1965, under the State of Florida, Chapter 65-1828, the Bonita Springs Volunteer Fire Department became the Bonita Springs Fire Control and Rescue District.

Bonita Springs Station One was built in 1954-1955 with mostly voluntary labor and donated materials. The property was acquired from Mr. Weire. The Fire Department purchased the property for his original cost, much less than current value. The Station was remodeled and added onto in 1960 and in 1979 the second story was constructed. More property was acquired in 1982-1983. In 1984 the existing fire station was demolished to make room for the new Bonita Springs Station One which was occupied on October 4, 1985.

Bonita Springs Fire Station Two is located at 28055 Mango Dr. and was constructed to provide fire protection and first response for medical emergencies on the coastal region of the District.

The expansion of commercial and residential construction, adjacent to US 41, determined the need for increased emergency response. The citizens responded by building Bonita Springs Fire Station Three, located at 25001 South Tamiami Trail, to provide service to the US 41 corridor as service demand grew.

I-75 brought new construction to the eastern most section of the Fire District. Moreover, the widening of I-75 expanded interstate travel and residential growth to the area further increasing emergency incidences. The lengthened emergency response times and frequency of emergency incidences spurred the initiative of the citizens to build the Bonita Springs Fire Station Four located at 27701 Bonita Grande Drive.

Furthermore, enhanced fire rescue response capabilities were necessary to provide life safety for the increasing high-rise population within gated communities, and the expansion of commerce on the US 41 corridor in Bonita Springs. Therefore, the citizens constructed the Bonita Springs Fire Station Five located at 8850 West Terry Street.

Currently, the five Bonita Springs Fire Stations are strategically located to provide the best and most economical service. The Fire District strives to be on scene in less than six minutes from the time the call is received. The five fire stations, coupled with the fleet of fire apparatus and highly skilled firefighter/EMTs and firefighter/paramedics attend to the fire and life safety needs of the citizens and visitors of Bonita Springs.

Fast forward to 2014, By the Numbers

In 2014,

- The Fire District responded to **5,523** emergency incidents.
- Emergency incidents had a **7%** increase from 2013.
- BSFCRD had **96** total personnel (**78** of which are fire suppression, **41** are paramedics and **37** are emergency medical technicians)
- Rapid intervention by BSFD firefighters saved over **\$37,551,102** of property in immediate fire damage.
- The Districts Fire Prevention Division reviewed **1,854** plans for the County and had **4,735** total inspections.
- The District educates nearly **25,000** members of the community each year through **32** public education programs

**By the Numbers, quoted from the Fire District's Annual Report, located [here](#)