



A Brief History

In 1952 the Oakhurst Volunteer Fire Department was organized to protect a large area of rural southeast Mecklenburg County from a fire station on Monroe Rd near Sharon Amity Rd (presently occupied by Plaza Appliance Outlet store.) That department served proudly until 1975 when it was dissolved due to annexations by the city of Charlotte. At that time the equipment from Oakhurst was donated to help organize the Idlewild Volunteer Fire Dept to serve the area between Matthews and Mint Hill, part of which had been previously served by Oakhurst. A new fire station was constructed Idlewild Road on land donated by Ken and Jan Ivy who owned and operated the Idlewild Country Club. Ken Ivy would go on to serve as Idlewild VFD's treasurer and mentor for the next 40 years. In those early years Idlewild VFD answered between 50 and 100 calls per year.

In 1981 Idlewild signed the first contract with the town of Mint Hill and in the same year took delivery of its first new engine. Also in 1981 Idlewild and Mint Hill VFD became the first departments in Mecklenburg County to receive an ISO insurance rating better than 9 without access to fire hydrants. In 1984 Idlewild signed the first contract with the town of Matthews.

For many years several members of Idlewild who were EMTs also responded with Mint Hill VFD's ambulance service to supplement their volunteer staffing. In 1991 Idlewild applied for and received approval from Mecklenburg County to become a medical first responder and began responding to medical emergencies in both Mint Hill and Matthews.

For the first thirty years of operation all staffing for Idlewild VFD was provided by uncompensated volunteers who responded from home or work when notified by pager. That changed in 2005 when, due to ever increasing call volume, part-time paid staff was first implemented for weekday responses. Over the next few years operations evolved to provide around-the-clock staffing of the fire station with a combination of part-time and volunteer personnel.

At the peak of operations Idlewild VFD was responding to almost 3,000 emergency calls per year. Continuing population growth and business development in Matthews and Mint Hill have recently prompted both towns to expand their town fire departments with additional fire stations and full-time staffing. Consequently, as of March 31, 2025, the Idlewild Volunteer Fire Department will cease providing service after almost fifty years of operation as an independent non-profit service organization. During that half century over 500 individuals have worked to respond to over 60,000 emergency calls.