

Southwest Portland

Find the address or utilize GPS and follow the path from one station to the next. These locations represent existing buildings that are either active Portland Fire Stations or former stations. Enjoy the journey!

PortlandFireHistory.com

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SW Portland	11 Stops	Station Description
Station 1 (Active Fire Station)	55 SW Ash Street, Portland OR 97204	<p>Station 1, or the Central Fire Station as it has also been known, was built in 1950. It replaced the prior main fire station that had been on 2nd Avenue at Pine Street. Station 1 was built with funding from a \$3 million Modernization Program Grant that modernized fire stations, apparatus, and dispatching operations. The station itself has always been the most heavily staffed fire station in Portland. When it opened in 1950, it housed Engine 21 and Truck 1. Soon after it opened, Station 2, just down the street at 3rd and NW Glisan, was condemned and closed. Engine 2 moved to Station 1 and for 12 years, the station was staffed with two responding Engine Companies. In 1962, Engine 2 was de-commissioned and became Squad 1, a specialty rescue unit that remains in service today. Other apparatus have responded from the station. They include Rescue 1, the on-duty deputy chief, and fire investigators. Other apparatus on site have included the Command Unit, the trench rescue unit, dive rescue unit, quick response boats, and various other equipment staffed on an as-needed basis. The building has also housed many administrative sections or Portland Fire & Rescue to include the Fire Marshal's Office, Public Education Office, Management Services, Planning and Development, and the offices of the Chief and most Division Chiefs. The building was equipped with numerous poles to allow firefighters to move quickly from floor to floor. From the third floor, poles led to the second floor. A different pole would be needed to travel from the second floor to the main floor. The building also has a parking garage in the basement. The building underwent a significant renovation in 2000 to make seismic upgrades, improved sleeping quarters for firefighters, and an overhaul of the offices on the second and third floor. The building has also housed various pieces of antique fire apparatus over the years. These would include an 1859 handpumper, an 1860 hose cart, an 1866 ladder wagon, and a 1911 steam pumper. Behind the Station, on 1st Avenue, walk to the Skidmore Fountain. Steven Skidmore, whose family were early Portland settlers and namesakes of the fountain, was a volunteer firefighter with Multnomah Engine</p>

		<p>Company #2 in the 1850s. His friend and co-firefighter, Henry Weinhard, is also a well known Portland business figure.</p> <p>When the fountain was to be dedicated in Stephen's honor, Henry offered to purchase fire hose and run it down Burnside Street from his Brewery (at West Burnside and 12th Avenue) to the fill the fountain with Beer. He petitioned the city fire commission with his offer but was refused. They stated "...didn't want children and horses getting drunk." The design of the fountain makes it a watering trough for horses and something humans could drink from too.</p>
<p>The David Campbell Memorial and Portland Firefighter Park <i>(Active Site)</i></p>	<p>1880 SW Burnside Street, Portland OR 97214</p>	<p>A triangular traffic island at West 18th and Burnside contains two features: Portland Firefighter Park and the David Campbell Memorial. David Campbell was Chief of the Portland Fire Department from 1895 to 1896. He was removed from his position due to political differences with the mayor. The following year, in 1896, a new administration was installed at city hall and Campbell was again promoted to Chief. He served continuously until his line of duty death on June 26, 1911. He was 47 years old. Campbell was very popular with the rank and file and with the citizens of Portland. His death rocked the city and his funeral procession was said to be the largest in the history of the City of Portland with an estimated 150,000 people lining the streets leading from downtown to his gravesite at Riverview Cemetery. While he was not the first Portland Firefighter to die in the line of duty, his death inspired a memorial to firefighters who would die in the line of duty. It would take 17 years, but on June 26, 1928, the memorial was unveiled to the citizens of Portland. It consists of a stone terrace and a limestone cenotaph on which a bronze bas-relief of Chief Campbell is displayed. The bas-relief shows Campbell in his uniform and holding his Chief's helmet in his hand. The sculpture was done by Avarad Tennyson Fairbanks in 1927. He was the professor of sculpture at the University of Oregon. It is mounted on a stone slab above a fountain and pool. These features were designed by Paul Cret, a world renowned architect recommended by an ex-student who was a Portland architect. A legend is mounted above the fountain stating "Erected by many friends in honor of David Campbell, Chief of the Portland Fire Department 1895 to 1911, who lost his life in the performance of his duty June 26, 1911. Greater Love Hath No Man Than This." It cost \$35,000 to build, all coming from private donations. Portland Firefighter Park is an accompanying property that was added in 1962 by the Junior Chamber of Commerce. The intersection was re-configured creating space that was suitable for an accompanying park. A large bell which once hung in the bell tower of Station 1 rests in the Park. It was purchased after "Black Saturday," the Portland fire of August 2, 1873</p>

		<p>which leveled 22 square blocks of the city. The bell weighs 4,200 pounds, 800 of which are pure silver. When rung, it could be heard all the way to Oregon City, 13 miles away. Not long after the bell arrived, a fire alarm telegraph system would begin to cover the city, rendering the bell nearly obsolete before it ever saw significant use.</p>
<p>Old Station 1 <i>(Inactive Site)</i></p>	<p>1436 SW Montgomery Street, Portland OR 97201</p>	<p>This station opened in 1911. It would originally house Engine 16. In 1939, Engine 16 would be taken out of service until 1944, when it would be reestablished in NW Portland. When Engine 16 was closed, Truck 8 responded from the station as a lone company. It was not uncommon in the early days for Truck companies to be housed as a single company. Today, Truck companies are always co-located with an Engine company. In 1948, Engine 1 would join Truck 8 and they would work together until 1960, at which time Truck 8 would be moved to SW Portland. Engine 1 would serve at this station for 3 more years. The station would be mothballed in 1963 and Engine 1 would cease to exist until 1984. This station is now in private ownership and served as the “Firehouse Theater” for many years.</p>
<p>Station 4 <i>(Active Fire Station)</i></p>	<p>511 SW College Street, Portland OR 97201</p>	<p>Station 4 opened in 1962 as part of the Modernization Program Grant that rebuilt or moved many Portland fire stations. It serves the downtown area and Portland State University. It is co-located with Truck 4. Truck 4 was also established in 1962, but prior to 1984, it was Truck 2. The number was changed in 1984 when Portland entered a contractual service agreement with Fire District #10 – East Multnomah County. That merger prompted the Truck numbers to be changed to a number that matched the Engine company in the station where they were co-located.</p>
<p>Station 15 <i>(Active Fire Station)</i></p>	<p>1920 SE Spring Street, Portland OR 97201</p>	<p>Station 15 was established in 1908. The original building, made of wood, was a grand building with almost a castle-like appearance. It would remain until 1925 when the present station was built. The current station is of the “bungalow” design. This design was first seen in 1913 and included significant changes such as low ceilings and concealed hose towers. In fact, the bungalows could not accommodate horse-drawn apparatus, so the handwriting of change to the motorized era was on the wall. ending the hose-drawn era. The first motorized fire apparatus would be purchased in 1911 when two horse-drawn and two motorized fire engines were purchased in the same year. This transitioned Portland Fire to the motorized era. While the first bungalow fire station was built in 1913, the next would not be built until 1923, after the department had become fully motorized in 1920.</p>
<p>Old Station 2 <i>(Inactive Site)</i></p>	<p>630 SW Gaines Street, Portland OR 97239</p>	<p>Station 2 would also be built under the Modernization Program Grant that built and re-located many stations. It was intended to provide better protection for the Oregon Health Sciences</p>

		University properties which were historically difficult to access in an emergency, especially during inclement weather. It was provided with only three firefighters, which was a departure from the typical staffing of 4-5 firefighters per apparatus. The station, while strategic in its location, was never very busy and would be closed in 1985 due to diminishing budgets.
Old Station 5 (Inactive Site)	3323 SW Naito Parkway, Portland OR 97239	Station 5 would be established in 1890 on this site. In 1924, the station needed to be upgraded and the bungalow station you see would be built. It would remain in service until 1957. At that time, the Modernization Program Grant would provide a new location for Engine 5 and it would come back into service in SW Portland in 1960. Since 1957, the building has been under multiple owners, including service as a birthing center.
Old Station 10 (Inactive Site)	5830 S Kelly Street, Portland OR 97239	Engine 10 moved to this location in 1925 from an older building that was established in 1906. This station is also a bungalow station. These stations were designed by Chief Lee Holden of the Portland Fire Department. He designed over 30 stations and had a profound influence on the fire department with some of his designs still being in service today. Of course, many upgrades and changes have occurred, but the location and general design have served well for over 100 years. Station 10 would close in 1984 and re-open the same year on Taylors Ferry Road.
Station 5 (Active Fire Station)	1505 SW DeWitt Street, Portland OR 97239	Station 5 would open in 1960 as part of the Modernization Program Grant. It would be house both Engine 5 and Truck 8. Truck 8 would remain until 1984 when station re-location changes resulting from budget constraints and the service agreement with Fire District #10 would prompt many changes. One significant change was to make Engine 5 a quad. A quad is similar to an Engine, but it includes additional ladders and additional staffing. Quad 5 would be staffed with 6 firefighters with the idea that they would be dispatched as either an Engine company, or a Truck company (but not both). It was an interesting concept that did not last more than a few years. The demands for a Truck company were deemed minimal, and Quad 5 eventually became Engine 5 again, with a four person staff. Recent years found it equipped with a Quint, a fire engine that includes a pump, tank, hose, ground ladders, and an aerial ladder.
Station 18 (Active Fire Station)	8720 SW 30th Avenue, Portland OR 97219	Station 18 was built in 1961 under the Modernization Program Grant. The original fire protection from the area came from the Multnomah Village Fire Department. In January 1926 the Multnomah Booster Club discussed what would happen if a fire started in the main business district. Just a few feet of fire hose was stored at the schoolhouse, and the nearest Portland fire station was miles away. They purchased 400 more feet of

		<p>hose and negotiated for a hose cart and an electric siren. A volunteer fire department was formed and involved mostly businessmen. The fire equipment was stored at the Wilcox Garage (later Beardsley's Garage). As the city of Portland annexed land to the west, Multnomah Village voted to become part of Portland in 1950. On August 1, 1951, the Multnomah Fire Station began service as a Portland Fire station. Ten years later, the new station on SW 30th would be built. It has served continuously since that time with nothing more than a seismic upgrade in the late 1990s. It serves the businesses and residential communities across SW Portland.</p>
<p>Station 10 <i>(Active Fire Station)</i></p>	<p>451 SW Taylors Ferry Road, Portland OR 97219</p>	<p>Station 10 was opened in 1984, replacing the old bungalow Station 10 on SW Kelly Street. It was the second new station to be built since the Modernization Program Grant of the early 1960s. It was controversial, to some extent, because it was the first station to incorporate mandatory artwork into its budget. The city of Portland began a program requiring 1% of the building budget to be dedicated to public art. In the case of Station 10, a stainless steel dragon was created the would wrap around the exterior of the building. It was met with mixed reviews. Subsequent stations met the art requirement in different ways. Most would have interior artwork in public areas.</p>

Please explore the other active and former fire stations in the other quadrants of Portland.

Thank you for visiting.