



## Our Lady of the Angels (OLA) School Fire, December 1, 1958

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### Fire Companies Responding to OLA Fire

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Type	Responding Companies	Time Returned to Quarters
<b>Still Alarm</b> 2:42 pm	Engine 85 Truck 35 Battalion 18 Squad 6 Patrol 7	9:31 pm 11:19 11:30 11:17 11:17
<b>Box Alarm</b> 2:44 pm	Engine 44 Engine 68 Engine 95 Truck 26 Truck 36 Battalion 23 6th Division Marshal 2nd Division Marshal	6:41 pm 6:29 6:31 8:50 8:56 7:34 6:01 11:49
<b>2-11 2nd Box Alarm</b> 2:47 pm	Engine 57 Engine 67 Engine 76 Engine 105 Truck 46 Battalion 24 Deputy Fire Commissioner 8 Deputy Fire Commissioner 9 Squad 7 Tower 4 Ambulance 10 High Pressure Wagon 7	6:32 pm 7:05 6:43 6:23 6:23 5:52 6:47 6:00 8:00 5:37 9:04 5:35
<b>3-11 * 3rd Box Alarm</b> 2:57 pm	Engine 24 Engine 77 Engine 114 Engine 117 Truck 32 Battalion 28 F.D. Chaplain Squad 2 High Pressure Wagon 2	6:16 pm 6:18 5:46 6:14 6:21 6:20 5:58 6:30 5:09
<b>4-11 * 4th Box Alarm</b> 2:57 pm	Engine 9 Engine 12 Engine 26 Engine 43 Engine 111 F.D. Doctor	5:08 pm 4:55 5:30 5:41 5:38 8:40
<b>5-11 5th Box Alarm</b> 2:57 pm	Engine 7 Engine 38 Engine 42 Engine 106 Engine 109	5:49 pm 5:46 5:20 6:08 5:56

	Fire Commissioner	8:07
	Chief Fire Marshal	8:18
	1st Deputy Fire Marshal	9:00
	Tower 1	5:05
	Tower 2	5:03
	High Pressure Wagon 1	5:04
<b>Special Calls</b> (with time of call)	Truck 7 (3:08 pm)	5:16 pm
	Truck 39 (3:08)	8:45
	Squad 1 (3:08)	6:32
	Squad 10 (3:10)	7:18
	Ambulance 2 (2:47)	9:24
	Ambulance 3 (2:47)	6:30
	Ambulance 7 (2:47)	6:48
	Ambulance 8 (2:47)	7:02
	Ambulance 11 (2:47)	7:05
	Ambulance 13 (2:47)	7:07
	Ambulance 15 (2:47)	6:45
	Ambulance 18 (2:47)	7:14
	Light Wagon 2 (4:30)	8:30 am 12/2
Light Wagon 3 (5:11)	9:12 pm	

\* The 3-11 and 4-11 alarms were not explicitly called, but were implicit when the 5-11 alarm was called.

Housekeeper Nora Maloney telephoned the first alarm ("Still Alarm") at 2:42 pm. When Engine 85 arrived at the school at 2:44 pm and saw they had a working fire, Lieutenant Stanley Wojnicki called the main alarm office and requested a Box Alarm. Coincidentally, the operator had just done so, based on the volume of telephone calls reporting the fire. Within minutes, firemen realized that many children were trapped in the burning school, prompting Engineer Henry Holden to request a 2nd alarm. When 18th Battalion Chief Miles Devine arrived at the scene and realized how many potential victims there were, he requested additional ambulances and police squadrols. Ten minutes later, at 2:57 pm, the roof collapsed and Devine immediately requested a 5-11 alarm, skipping over the 3rd and 4th alarms that would normally have been called first.

Twenty-two engine companies responded to the OLA fire, along with 7 truck (hook & ladder) companies, plus numerous rescue squads, insurance patrols, ambulance companies, high pressure wagons, light wagons, towers (snorkels) and battalion chiefs. In 1958, the Chicago Fire Department consisted of 126 engine companies, 59 truck companies, and 13 rescue squads, all divided into 30 battalions in 6 divisions.

The Chicago Police Department also dispatched men and equipment to the fire: approximately 100 officers, 27 squadrols, 23 three-wheeled motorcycles, and 23 squad cars. Overhead, traffic helicopter patrolman Baldy, who normally made radio traffic reports, helped emergency equipment find the best routes to and from the fire.

The record for the number of people rescued at a single fire by the Chicago Fire Department was set at Our Lady of the Angels. In less than 15 minutes, firefighters rescued at least 160 children and nuns from the school.

[Back](#) [Top of Page](#) [Home](#)