

The Ruston Central Fire Station stands on a corner at the edge of the community's central business district. The two story, stucco over poured concrete structure was erected in 1926. Although it has undergone some alterations, it retains its National Register eligibility.

The building presents a restrained appearance and does not reflect any particular style. Its exterior features of note are overhanging eaves, paired windows, and brick lintels and window sills. Pressed tin ceilings are the interior's only decorative element. These are found in the engine room, which fills the entire first floor, and in some of the upstairs office and dormitory spaces. The upstairs rooms open off a hallway.

The fire station was expanded in 1945 by the addition of a discrete one story side wing which is sensitive to the original design. It is built of the same material as the original fire station and also copies the original's window detailing. Other changes since construction include the replacement of the structure's folding accordion doors by modern electric doors and the addition or plywood paneling and dropped acoustic tile ceilings in some of the upstairs rooms. The interior modifications and the change in doors have not had a serious visual impact upon the building. The fire station would easily be recognized by anyone from the historic period. Because its construction represented the "coming of age" of the city's fire department and an important event in the community's history, the Ruston Central Fire Station is a prime candidate for National Register listing.

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| Significant dates | 1926 |
| Architect/Builder | Unknown |
| Criterion A | |

The Ruston Central Fire Station is locally significant in the area of social history within the Lincoln Parish community of Ruston because the building represents an important event in the community's development. That event was the professionalization, or "coming of age," of the city's fire department.

Ruston was founded in 1883 when the Vicksburg, Shreveport, and Pacific Railroad came through Lincoln Parish. However, when town founder Robert E. Russ donated lots for a courthouse, school, cemetery, and three churches, he failed to make a similar donation for a fire department. As a result, the city's first piece of fire fighting equipment, a two-wheeled tank with a hand pump, was stored outside the mayor's office. When a fire occurred, this tank was pushed to the blaze by any manpower available. The Ruston Volunteer Fire Department was not established until 1897, when the community obtained running water. At this time the town bought a new horse-drawn hose and ladder wagon and built a fire station to house it. However, this station was little more than a stable to shelter the wagon and the two horses needed to pull it.

Ruston's fire department was motorized in 1915, but the town's first fire truck lacked the ability to pump water. This problem was corrected in 1924 by the purchase of an American-LaFrance pumper truck. Despite these improvements in fire protection, the fire department remained a volunteer organization until 1926. In that year the city ordered its second fire truck and replaced the small 1897 fire hall with a modern structure designed to house four vehicles. In addition to a large engine room, the new Central Fire Station also contained an office, kitchen, guest room, showers, and an eight bed dormitory. Thus, by providing a fire fighting headquarters which could be manned 24 hours a day, the new building made the founding of the city's first full time fire department possible. As the symbol of the department's "coming of age," the Ruston Central Fire Department is a strong candidate for National Register listing.

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Site visit by National Register staff.

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