

# A Guide to the Arlington Air Raid Warden Service Records, 1941-1943

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A Collection in Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History RG 135  
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## Title Statement

A Guide to the Arlington Air Raid Warden Service Records, 1941-1943

**Subtitle:**

**Collection:** RG 135

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## Publication Statement

**Date:** © 2002 Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** Machine-readable finding aid derived from MS Word, created by Gregory Pierce, 8 December 2020

**Language Usage:** Description is in English

## Descriptive Summary

### Collection number

RG 135

### Language

English

### Creator

Arlington Air Raid Warden Service

### Extent

1 box.

### Repository

Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History

## Administrative Information

### Access Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

### Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

### Acquisition Information

Gift of Doris Hazel, daughter of Warden Thomas D. Whitely, in August 2002.

## Preferred Citation

Arlington Air Raid Warden Service Records, Collection # RG 135, Arlington Public Library, Center for Local History

## Adjunct Descriptive Data

## Related Material

For more information on firefighting and rescue in Arlington, see [RG 4, Records of the Arlington Fire Department Records](#), and [RG 170, Personal Papers of James Fought](#). For other resources about Arlington's local response to World War II, see [RG 27, Personal Papers of Beulah Shipley Goss](#), which deals with war rationing in the county, and [RG 90, Company No. 7: Virginia Reserve Militia Records](#), which documents another local preparedness group.

## Historical Information

The Air Raid Warden Service began during World War II. Local citizens served as wardens under the command of the Chief Control Officer. Within the Northern Virginia area Arlington County was divided into Civilian Defense Zones. The twenty-eight zones in the county were further subdivided into sectors, the smallest air-raid protection unit. Each sector included a population of about 500 persons. The senior sector warden oversaw each sector with the help of assistant air raid wardens, firewatchers, and messengers. The wardens attended workshops on chemical warfare, incendiary devices, and gas masks. One Arlington warden was Thomas D. Whiteley.

The county held periodic air raid drills. When the alarm sounded the warden would monitor citizen compliance and record this information in reports. Drills could take place day or night. The reports noted how quickly people stopped their tasks and sought appropriate shelter. At night, the wardens paid particular attention to blackout compliance efforts.

Following World War II, the Air Raid Warden Service was disbanded. In 1950, as the Cold War gained prominence, the Governor of Virginia established the Northern Virginia Civil Defense Region. Arlington County followed suit by reactivating the Office of Civil Defense on August 12, 1950.

## Scope and Content

RG 135 holds material from Arlington County's Air Raid Warden Service from 1941-1943 and measures .2 linear feet. Much of the material is from Arlington County or the Washington metropolitan area and includes information about how to prepare your home for an air raid and specific information about combating a fire bomb or gas attack.

Of special note are the dwelling surveys in the first two folders. The survey contains information about the structure of each home and its construction materials. There are additional notes if the home has residents that could help in an attack (i.e. medical background) or have items that can help in clean up and recovery (i.e. fire hoses and wheelbarrows).

## Index Terms

### Subjects:

Air Raid Warden's Service  
Air raid wardens  
Civil defense -- United States.  
Air defenses -- United States  
Civil defense warning systems -- United States.  
Arlington (Va.)  
Arlington County (Va.)

## Arrangement

RG 135, due to its small size, is arranged in files based on subject of material.

# Contents List

## Box 1

**File 1: Dwelling Surveys: 25th Place N., 25th Road N., 25th Street N.**

**File 2: Dwelling Surveys: 26th Street N., N. Columbus St., N. Florida St., George Mason Drive**

**File 3: Logbook, Zone V-8 Sector C, 1942**

**File 4: Memos, 1941-1943**

**File 5: Miscellaneous**

**File 6: Reports on Air Raid Alarms, 1942-1943**

**File 7: Sample Disaster Practice Exercises**

**File 8: Training Materials**