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## PRESS RELEASE

FROM: David B. Bone, Town Manager  
Jamie Fulk, Fire Chief

DATE: February 22, 2007

SUBJ.: Presentations Made to Town of Elizabethtown Personnel by Apex Fire Chief  
Mark Haraway

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On February 21<sup>st</sup>, Town of Elizabethtown personnel heard presentations by Apex Fire Chief Mark Haraway concerning the emergency response involving Apex and other jurisdictions and agencies to a chemical fire at EQ Industrial Services in Apex, NC in October of 2006. As the Fire Chief, Chief Haraway was the "Incident Commander" on-scene at the event.

A chemical fire erupted at EQ Industrial Services on October 5, 2006. The fire burned for two days, and over 17,000 people were evacuated (approximately half of the residents of Apex). It is estimated that over 1,000 local, State, and Federal agency personnel were involved in the response. According to an MSNBC report, "There were no reports of serious injuries caused by the fire or the chemical haze it produced. Officials said 44 people went to emergency rooms, most complaining of breathing problems, but nearly all had been released by midday Friday [on October 6, 2006]." The event had national and international news coverage.

Chief Haraway made a presentation about the event to Town Staff in the afternoon. During the evening, Chief Haraway made another presentation to Firefighters from the Elizabethtown Fire Department, as well as other Firefighters and other emergency personnel from throughout Bladen County.

Chief Haraway (who was the Fire Chief of Elizabethtown from December, 1999 to May, 2002) spoke about the events and issues involved in the response to the fire including evacuation, public notification, the decision-making process, media relations, inter-agency cooperation and other items.

Town of Elizabethtown personnel (as are personnel from other jurisdictions) are required to be trained in the National Incident Management System (NIMS), which is a protocol promoted by the Department of Homeland Security to help in the command and management of emergency responses. NIMS was developed so responders from different jurisdictions and disciplines can work together better to respond to natural disasters and emergencies. Town personnel received NIMS training during the fall of 2006, and the presentation by Chief Haraway was scheduled as a follow-up to the NIMS training.

(Photos attached – Please contact Town Clerk Juanita Hester at 910-862-2066 for digital copies of photos.)

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