



News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bladen, Cumberland Counties Hold Successful Haz-Mat Exercise

FAYETTEVILLE – Bladen and Cumberland County Emergency Services departments held a full-scale hazardous materials training exercise Aug. 29 at the Chemours Fayetteville Works plant located on the county line at 22828 N.C. Highway 87.

The exercise simulated the release of the chemical sulfur trioxide (SO₃) from an overturned tanker at the industrial site. Using a real tanker and smoke to simulate the chemical release, the multi-agency exercise tested operational coordination, mass care services, communications, situational assessment and public health and medical services. The scenario included having the accident happen during a shift-change at the plant, which resulted in workers being exposed while traveling to and from the facility.

“Any time you can bring together multiple agencies, from multiple jurisdictions, and include private industry to improve response, it is a win-win for the communities involved,” said Cumberland County Emergency Management Coordinator Gene Booth.

In addition to Cumberland and Bladen County Emergency Services, other participants included Cumberland County Department of Social Services, Public Health Department and Sheriff’s Office; American Red Cross; Cape Fear Valley EMS; Bladen County EMS; Tar Heel Rescue; and Gray’s Creek, Cotton, Pearce’s Mill and Tobermory fire departments. The emergency response team from the Fayetteville Works site, which include Chemours, DuPont and Kurary, also participated. Students from Campbell University’s Homeland Security program portrayed citizens affected by the incident.

The event was sponsored by the Cumberland County Local Emergency Planning Committee, which received an \$8,300 Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation. The committee serves as a liaison between the industry sector and community by working with facilities to develop their facility emergency response plans. Committee members include representatives from the City of Fayetteville, Cumberland County, the military, local industry and the community at-large.

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Tobermory Fire Department sets up its operation to reduce the vapor cloud during a mock exercise Aug. 29.



Hazardous materials technicians help to remove a firefighter from the scene during a training exercise Aug. 29.

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First responders go through a decontamination process before leaving the “hot zone” during a training exercise Aug. 29.

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