

Solution 'Without Government' Urged For Towns, Menhaden Firms

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lose situation," Redwine said. "But I've always been one who believed in talking things out face to face."
The local move to regulate menhaden fishing started at Long Beach, where officials have documented five menhaden-related fish spills in the past 10 years. The latest occurred about two months ago.
"Our point was not to ban the fishery or damage the fishery," Mayor Joan Altman said last week. "However, we feel we've got to have some sort of consideration of our problems."

One of the biggest problems for beach towns when a fish spill occurs is the public relations damage. Officials fear tourists won't return if the most vivid memory of their vacation is thousands of smelly fish on the strand.

"We do have complaints from tourists and game fishermen," Altman said. "It generates an unfavor-

able impression of our town."
Town leaders said requiring menhaden boats to stay at least 1 1/2 miles offshore during the peak tourist season would lower the risk of fish washing up on the beach.
"Obviously we don't want to close down the fishing. We just want to protect what we have," Caswell Beach Commissioner Joe O'Brien said.

Menhaden company officials said they would gladly stay offshore, but they have to fish where they find the schools of menhaden. In Brunswick County, most menhaden stay within a mile of the beach.

"Unfortunately we are an inshore fishery," said Steve Jones of Zapata Protein, one of two Virginia-based companies that work in local waters. "We'd like to be far enough offshore that nobody could see us."

Mike Street, research section chief with the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, said summer is the pri-

"We'll do anything you ask us to. But if you take our fishing grounds we're out of business."

—Joe Wheatly, Beaufort Fisheries

mary season for menhaden fishing in Brunswick County and most are caught just off the beaches.

From 1986 through 1993, 21 percent of the menhaden caught locally were within a quarter mile of the beach and 52 percent were within a half mile. Street said 69 percent were within one mile and 91 percent within two miles.

"To close Brunswick County would devastate the menhaden industry in North Carolina," said Jule Wheatly, president of Beaufort Fisheries, the only active menhaden

operation in the state.
"We're here to work with you. We'll do anything you ask us to. But if you take our fishing grounds we're out of business," said Wheatly, who also is a member of the Marine Fisheries Commission.

In North Carolina, menhaden fishing is prohibited on holidays and weekends from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Menhaden fishing is banned off the coasts of Maryland, Delaware and South Carolina.

"It's getting to the point that we have lost grounds up and down the

East Coast. We are running out of area," said John Barnes of the Virginia-based AMPRO Fisheries Company.

Prompted by Redwine, menhaden company officials said they are willing to give notification when working off Brunswick County and stay at least 750 feet from fishing piers.

They promised to use a defoaming agent to break up fish oil slicks if state environmental officials approve. Menhaden boats are required to use the product in New Jersey waters.

Industry officials also said they would reimburse the towns for any costs associated with cleaning up fish spills, even if they aren't responsible but happened to be fishing in the vicinity at the time of the incident.

Depending on what the Marine Fisheries Commission decides at its meeting, a committee of town and

industry officials may be formed to draft a solution that both groups can handle.

Jerry Schill, executive director of the N.C. Fisheries Association, said the towns can resolve the problem quicker by working with industry officials than it can by working through the government.

Melba Edwards, a commercial fisherman from Southport, said commercial fishermen don't need any more regulations.

"The commercial fishing industry is under assault from the state and federal government. It won't be long before commercial fishing is wiped out in the United States," she said.

Menhaden is the largest volume fishery on the East Coast with more than 300,000 tons landed per year.

The fish are used primarily for oil and fish meal and are captured in a purse seine, a large net that is laid out around the school of fish and then pulled shut at the bottom.

Shalotte, County ABC Boards Discuss Merger

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four years ago, the amount of money Shalotte receives from its store has dropped more than 60 percent.

Town officials expect \$20,000 in ABC revenues this fiscal year. In the five years prior to the opening of the Holden Beach Road store, Shalotte received an average of \$64,359 per year from its store.

"The way we're going the future doesn't look too bright," Shalotte Alderman Carson Durham said. "I think it would behoove all of us to sit down and consider how we can do it together."

Alderman Roney Cheers, who

was mayor of Shalotte when the ABC store opened, said he has a great interest in keeping it open.

"I don't want to see anything happen with our store," he said. "I don't want to see the store and its profits eroded to the point where it's no more."

Shalotte officials decided to open talks with the county ABC board after it was suggested by Raymond "Clyde" Babson, a town resident who previously served on the county board.

"I feel like if these two boards will sit down the world is full of options," Babson said.



Looking Forward, Looking Back

Becky Evans of Shalotte escorts her daughter Rae (right) to her first-grade classroom on the first day of school at Union Elementary. Four-year-old Colbee Evans wore a matching dress to give her sister moral support.

Precautions In Place At Supply

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flow alarm on the septic tanks to give a three-hour advance warning that the tanks need to be pumped out; and repair surface drainage problems.

The N.C. Department of Transportation has cleaned out a culvert under the bus drive, a move expected to sharply reduce surface run-off.

"The pipe had filled up and water

was coming up over the road instead of going under it and was running across the bus lot and toward the drainage field," said Boney.

While the architectural firm and consulting civil engineers Talbert & Bright are looking forward to a "solution with a long-term lasting effect," Boney said he thinks what Brunswick County needs as a long-term solution is a central sewer system.

TRAINING AT SUNNY POINT

Mock Accident Staged In Preparation For Nuke Shipments

BY ERIC CARLSON

A shipping container loaded with nuclear fuel rods tumbled off a railroad car at the Sunny Point Military Ocean Terminal last week when a train hauling the radioactive cargo applied emergency brakes to avoid colliding with a stalled automobile.

Fortunately it was only a drill staged to test the readiness of emergency workers who might be called upon to handle such an occurrence when the first of three planned shipments of spent fuel rods from European research reactors passes through the ammunition terminal near Southport sometime in the next few weeks.

More than 60 federal, state and local personnel took part in three days of training and a final exercise set up at a railroad siding on Sunny Point property Thursday (Aug. 18).

First on the "accident" scene was Trooper Caulder of the N.C. Highway patrol, who screeched to a halt a safe distance away and took radioactivity readings with a Geiger

counter like the ones kept aboard all state patrol cars.

Brunswick County Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Cecil Logan arrived a few minutes later and cordoned off the area with yellow tape before setting up a mobile command post. Fire and rescue workers were brought in, donning white protective suits and plastic booties before proceeding to the wreck site for a closer look at the situation.

"In a case like this, our first concerns, in order of priority are the accident victims, public safety and the environment," Bruce Hurley of the U.S. Department of Energy's Nevada Operations Office explained during a briefing before the exercise. "We believe that container is less important than other things at the scene."

The metal casks used to transport the spent fuel rods are designed to withstand the type of impact that might be expected in such an incident, said DOE spokesman Bob

Giusti. The containers have been dropped from heights of 30 feet "on to an unyielding surface" to make sure they won't come open. The casks have also been tested in fires and underwater to assure their integrity, he said.

Calling the upcoming nuclear fuel shipments "nothing new," officials said the Department of Energy made two million "radiological shipments" in 1992 and has experienced "no accidental release" of transported nuclear material in 45 years.

The military ocean terminal is scheduled to receive more than 400 spent fuel rods in the next decade from reactors in Austria, Denmark, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. The U.S. government wants to get the radioactive material out of Europe to prevent its sale to those who might use it for the production of nuclear weapons.

Officials said the exact arrival time of the first shipment will not be

released for security reasons. However, the first batch of fuel rods is expected to arrive at the munitions terminal sometime in late August or early September.

A second shipment of fuel rods will be sent through Sunny Point in January or February, with a third delivery possible in late 1995.

After arriving at MOTSU, the

spent fuel rods will be quickly loaded onto a special five-car train manned by two armed guards for the trip to the DOE's Savannah River Site near Aiken, S.C.

"The rods will be here for less than 24 hours. We'll have them on rail cars and on their way to Savannah River as quickly as possible," Giusti said.

Area Receives Good Soaking

Widely scattered showers and thunderstorms that moved through the South Brunswick Islands area last week dumped nearly 4 inches of rain in at least one location.

"We finally got some rain, at least at my rain gauge," said Shalotte Point amateur meteorologist Jackson Canady, who measured 3.97 inches during the period Aug. 16-22.

The maximum high temperature for the week was 91 degrees on Aug. 18, and the minimum low reading was 69 degrees on the 16th.

Canady reported a daily average high of 88 degrees and an average nightly low of 73 degrees. The daily average of 80 degrees is about normal for this time of year, he said.

For the upcoming week, Canady said he expected normal temperatures and rainfall. Temperatures should range from the upper 60s at night to the upper 80s during the day, with about 3/4 of an inch of rain.

Investigators say the ten acted with a "gang mentality" when they piled into two cars and drove to Davis' home with the intention of exacting revenge for a dispute that occurred earlier that evening.

Attorneys for defendants who appeared in court Monday said their clients "thought they were going to see a fight" and were unaware that a murder was about to be committed. Some said they thought the purpose was to "scare" Davis or "to teach him a lesson." One lawyer said his client "became appalled at what he saw and cried at the scene."

But Assistant District Attorney Lee Bollinger told the judge his evidence would show that some—if not all—of the defendants knew that one of the assailants had a pistol and another was carrying a machete. At least some of them heard talk of getting another gun. Some were also present when Ford allegedly claimed he was "going to smoke a white dude." Two of them drove the cars that carried the murder suspects away from the scene.

Bollinger also noted that none of the defendants went to police to report the murder after seeing Davis shot in the back, kicked, beaten and slashed with a machete.

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Telephone 754-6890
Published Every Thursday
At 4709 Main Street
Shalotte, N.C. 28459

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