

Calabash Road Intersection To Get Warning Light System

A warning light system—the first of its kind in Brunswick County—will be installed within six weeks at the intersection of U.S. 17 and Calabash Road, an area transportation official said Tuesday.

According to D.J. Bowers, division engineer for the N.C. Department of Transportation, the system was recommended last month after his office reviewed the intersection and its accident history at the request of

State Rep. E. David Redwine.

Bowers said the intersection justifies a warning device due to U.S. 17's heavy traffic volume and the number of mishaps that have occurred there. Figures on the intersection's accident history were unavailable Tuesday.

The system will consist of a light that will flash yellow on U.S. 17 when a vehicle is entering the main highway from either side. A red light

will flash continuously on both Calabash Road approaches to U.S. 17.

Also, an overhead sign will be installed to warn U.S. 17 motorists that vehicles are entering the highway when the yellow light is flashing.

Bowers said he is unaware of any other warning system of this type in Brunswick County. It has been used with good results on U.S. 421 in Sampson County, he noted.

The engineer estimated that installation of the light and sign will cost between \$6,000 and \$7,000, with the monies to come from either DOT's spot safety funds or its primary maintenance allocations.

When U.S. 17 eventually is widened to four lanes, the warning device will be removed, since the characteristics of the intersection will be totally different, Bowers said.

Prescribed Burning Good Medicine For Woodlands

Burning by prescription doesn't sound like good medicine, but for local woodlands it can be.

The N.C. Division of Forest Resources is offering free help to private landowners as part of an effort

to increase the number of woodland acres prescribed burned for hazard reduction purposes.

So why is prescribed burning good? A hazard reduction burn, according to the Division, reduces fire

damage to timber in case a wildfire should occur.

Growth of timber is promoted by the reduction of undesirable species which are in direct competition for nutrients; and

Wildlife benefit, foraging the new growth that comes up following a burn.

Through February, the Division is helping landowners with winter burns. Its services consist of training, writing burn plans, plowing fire lines, notification when suitable weather conditions exist for burning and control of escaped fires.

When a landowner is unable or unwilling to do the burning himself, the Division of Forest Resources will contract to handle the hazard reduction burning. A designated fee per acre will be charged.

More information is available from Brunswick County Forest Ranger Miller Caison at 253-5297.

Ranger Recommends Caution When Burning

Forest fire season is just around the corner, according to Brunswick County Forest Ranger Miller Caison.

Winter rains and snow keep leaves wet and the likelihood of a forest fire is low until the skies clear and the winds of March begin to blow.

Too often this happens almost suddenly, said Caison, and people using fire out of doors don't recognize the developing danger. Wildfires result.

Last year approximately 4,500 wildfires burned 24,000 acres in North Carolina. In Brunswick County a wet winter contributed to a mild fire season. Caison, his staff, volunteer fire departments and private citizens extinguished 90 fires that charred 531 acres.

Statewide 39 percent of wildfires in 1988 were caused by careless debris burners. Another 22 percent were intentionally set by arsonists. The remaining 39 percent were started by smokers, machine use, children, lightning and miscellaneous causes.

Caison said the Division of Forest Resources is making a concerted effort to increase public awareness of the forest arson problem. Even billboard advertisements are being used in areas where the problem is greatest, to make would-be arsonists and the public aware of the seriousness of the crime.

Special state law enforcement rangers and local law officers investigate each case of wood arson. Conviction can result in a prison sentence and/or heavy fine.

Brunswick County has approx-

imately 414,849 acres of forest land, a resource of importance to the local economy.

Caison cautions local residents to be very careful when using fire out of doors, especially in the area's traditional fire season months of March,

April and early May.

Also, Caison asked anyone who knows of a person intentionally setting fire to burn woodlands owned by another to call him at 253-5297 or the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department.

3 Injured In U.S. 17 Wreck

Three local motorists were hurt in a collision on U.S. 17 last week that involved a pickup truck and a tractor-trailer rig, according to Highway Patrol spokesperson Ruby Oakley.

The accident happened Jan. 24 at 6:55 p.m., 1.6 miles north of Bolivia on U.S. 17, when a 1987 Ford tractor-trailer driven by Allan Orrin Gover Jr., 38, of Wilmington, struck a 1968 Chevrolet pickup driven by William Dawson, 46, of Bolivia, Ms. Oakley said.

The collision occurred when Gover attempted to pass the Dawson vehicle as it was making a left turn off U.S. 17. Trooper J.V. Dove charged Gover with failure to reduce speed.

Ms. Oakley said Gover was not hurt. Dawson and his two passengers—nine-year-old Sharon Dawson and 14-year-old Linette Smith—all suffered incapacitating injuries and were taken by am-

bulance to The Brunswick Hospital near Supply.

Dove estimated damages at \$1,500 to the tractor-trailer and \$2,000 to the pickup truck.

No injuries were reported in a traffic accident that happened last Thursday at 7 p.m., three miles west of Shallotte on N.C. 130.

The mishap occurred when a 1973 Pontiac driven by Shane Darryl Gett, 25, of Ash, struck a 1979 Ford truck that had stalled as it backed onto the highway, Ms. Oakley said.

She added that the truck driver—Robert Lawrence Stanley of Shallotte—got out of the vehicle prior to the collision and unsuccessfully attempted to flag down Gett.

Trooper D.A. Lewis charged Gett with having an improper registration and no insurance on his vehicle. Damages were estimated at \$800 to Stanley's truck and \$200 to the Gett auto.

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