

Warrenton Major Fire Incident Details

02/03/11 678 W - + 4 - 8

Version 2.1. Last updated Feb 7 at 9:15 p.m.

General

- Fire reported about 5:45 p.m. at the Southern States Farm & Garden store at 216 W. Franklin Street.
- One-story concrete block building measuring 228 by 268 square feet, say tax records.
- Total square footage of 63, 184.
- News reports called the thing two blocks long.
- First due Engine 31 reported Main Street thick with smoke when they left the station, and flames visible over the buildings.
- Controlled within three hours (?).
- At least 20 fire departments on scene or involved.

Warren County

- Warrenton Rural FD
- Afton-Elberon FD
- Arcola FD
- Churchill-Five Forks VFD
- Drewry FD
- Hawtree VFD
- Inez VFD
- Long Bridge FD
- Macon Rural VFD
- Norlina FD
- Ridgeway VFD
- Roanoke-Wildwood FD
- Soul City FD

Vance County

- Bear Pond FD, tanker (?)
- Vance County FD, tanker, two aerials. Snorkel, former joint Vance FD and Henderson FD unit. Telesquirt, former Kerr Lake FD.
- Cokesbury FD, tanker

Mecklenburg County, VA

- Lake Gaston FD, tanker plus engine and snorkel standing by at station
- Palmer Springs FD, tanker
- South Hill FD, tanker

Regional Response from Raleigh Fire Department

- North Carolina Hazardous Materials Regional Response Team (RRT) 4
- Haz-Mat 15
- SR 2
- SR 3
- Car 71

Coverage:

- Lake Gaston FD (Brunswick VA) engine and snorkel at Warrenton fire station

- Gold Sand FD (Franklin) in Afton-Elberon (?) area
- Epsom FD (Franklin) in Warren County
- Littleton FD (Halifax) unit at Macon FD

EMS:

- Warren County
- Vance County
- Wake EMS, one unit, part of regional response
- Who else?

Other agencies:

- Warren County Fire Marshal/Emergency Management
- Vance County Fire Marshal
- Warrenton Police
- Warren County Sheriff's Office
- Red Cross - Operated evacuation center at Warren County High School and fed firefighters at fire station.
- Warrenton Public Works
- Warrenton Water Department
- Warrenton County School System - Evacuation center and provided busses for transportation of evacuees.
- NC DOT - For sand
- Progress Energy

Water supply included both hydrants and water shuttles, as the pressure on the municipal system was insufficient for all the aerial and master stream operations.

- Hydrant, Franklin and Front streets
- Hydrant #2
- Hydrant #3 (was there a third?)
- Hydrant, Graham and Brehon for Norlina engine in neighborhood behind structure
- Tank, Franklin and Dameron streets. Where was the water point?
- Tank, parking lot of library building on east side of structure. Where was the water point?

Command locations

- Incident command at fire station. Fire Marshal and Deputy Mayor there, also used as staging and rehab location.
- Operations command in front of fire building.

Aerial streams:

- Vance County FD snorkel (Tower 8) on east/right side of building. Used for short time until water hammer disabled.
- Vance County FD telesquirt (Ladder 7) on west/left side of building.
- Warren Rural FD platform in front of building.

Master streams:

- Ground monitor in front of building.
- Ground monitor on east/right side of building, from library parking lot.
- Ground monitor in rear of building. Aerial apparatus could not fit back there.

Exposures

- Residential neighborhood behind the structure at the end of Brehon Street. Fire initially spread to the woods between the back of the building and the neighbor. Exposure protection included placement of a Norlina engine and crew at the end of Brehon Street. They were supplied by a hydrant from Graham and Brehon streets.
- Library building just east of the structure. It suffered minor damage including melted shingles and warped facade.
- News reports said several buildings had caught fire, and crews were stationed throughout city as precaution.

Hazardous Materials

- Hazards included fertilizer and stored fuel.
- Regional haz-mat team responded from Raleigh, see above.
- Units staged and based operations at Warren New Tech High School parking lot, 427 W. Franklin Street.
- Haz-mat operations included entry crews into building and monitoring of air quality.

Other Details

- Fire watch overnight at building (Engine-31, Tower-12, and Brush-37). Next shift scheduled for relief at 0700 this morning. Still burning, and still small explosions heard.
- Evacuation order later issued for surrounding area, about 12 blocks. Businesses ordered closed until Saturday. Two schools closed, New Tech High School nearby on Franklin Street and Warren County High School, because it was an evacuation center.
- Evacuation order later lifted.

Incident Photos

- [Mike Legeros](#)
- [John Franks](#).

Mike,

One small correct (from me), Lake Gaston is actually in Mecklenburg County and not Brunswick County. Sorry about that.

John.

John W. Franks ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 02/05/11 - 17:52

Also, I finally got some time to figure out who responded and besides the ones above I think the following agencies responded:

Bear Pond VFD (Vance Co.) – 1 tanker?

Littleton VFD (Halifax Co.) – 1 unit to stand-by in Macon, and 1 tanker to Warrenton.

Warren Co. Fire Marshal/Emergency Management

Vance Co. Fire Marshal

American Red Cross – Ran evacuation center at Warren Co. HS, and feed FFs at Warrenton Rural's station.

Warrenton Public Works

Warrenton Water Department

Warren Co. School System – Evacuation center at Warren Co. HS, and supplied buses to transport evacuees.

NC DOT (for sand)

Warrenton PD

Warren Co. SO

Progress Energy

John W. Franks ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 02/05/11 - 18:04

One correction. Littleton only sent a unit with 5 personnel to Macon for coverage. No tanker went to Warrenton.

Trey Evans - 02/07/11 - 22:14

One postscript to this incident is this thank you letter from Fire Chief (and Mayor) Walter Gardner in today's Warrenton Record, <http://www.vancnews.com/articles/2011/02..>

Recalls the letters of appreciation of a century prior, that would appear in local papers after larger fires, where the fire chief or other officials would praise and thank those who participated.

Legeros - 02/16/11 - 22:26

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