



# MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Mayor and City Councilors  
**From:** Rich Olson, City Manager  
**Date:** October 22, 2013  
**Re:** Presentation – Certificates of Recognition to Fire Department Personnel

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***BACKGROUND:***

On October 13, 2013, the Elizabeth City Fire Department responded to a call of a man trapped in a grain bin in Camden County. What began as a routine call to the Fire Department ended up being a major Emergency Management incident due to the number of individuals involved and technological knowledge required to rescue them.

The following is the after-action summary of what transpired prepared by Acting Deputy Chief Dale Smith, which demonstrates the cooperation of the different departments involved and the use of the Incident Command System.

Mayor Peel has recommended that the City Council acknowledge those fire fighters involved in this rescue.

***AFTER ACTION SUMMARY REPORT:***

**Elizabeth City Fire Department  
Response to  
George Wood Farms Grain Bin Rescue**

On Monday, October 14, 2013, at 1202 hours, Camden Volunteer FD was dispatched to a reported man trapped in a grain bin at 113 S 343 Hwy, George Wood Farms, Inc. Acting Deputy Chief of Operations, Dale Smith notified Central to advise the first responding units that Elizabeth City FD had the Grain Tubes. Camden VFD immediately requested ECFD. Chief Smith responded with Engine #2 and T-46.

Once on scene, Chief Smith met with Incident Commander Robbie Tarkington and Wes Morgan. We had a total of three men trapped up to their faces with corn and two men trapped to about their waist. Chief Smith assisted Robbie Tarkington with setting up Incident Command and helping with Strategies and Tactics. Emergency Management Coordinator Christy Saunders arrived and

assisted in the Incident Command System as well. Engine #2 arrived and began setting up rigging equipment and preparing to make entry for Rescue Operations. Wes Morgan from Camden VFD, was placed as Rescue Group Leader which was responsible for operations inside the grain silo. ECFD Captain Donald Porter, who was there as a Camden VFD firefighter, was placed in charge of Rigging Operations. Ladder #1 was called to assist with manpower and to provide aerial operations for rigging. Ladder #1 crew with part of Engine #2 crew set up rigging outside and from above using Ladder #1's aerial platform.

The first two men that were buried up to their waist were not rescued as quickly, because of the fear of what would happen to the other three men when they were removed. Inside, the crews were using tubes donated by Lansing Trade Group, owners of C.A. Perry, and plywood to shore up around the trapped men. The tubes are made of aluminum and are designed to be placed around a victim to prevent further entrapment. When the shoring was in place the two men buried to their waist were removed. The crew on the outside cut three holes in the side of the silo which allowed enough relief to extricate the remaining three men. All crews worked diligently to free the trapped workers from the grain bins.

Members from Elizabeth City Fire Department that participated are: Acting Deputy Chief Dale Smith, Deputy Chief Barry Overman, Captain Donald Porter, Captain Darren Saunders, Acting Captain Shane Christian, Engineer Dean Harris, Engineer Brad Owens, Firefighter Timmy Chesson, Firefighter Brian Hickman, Firefighter Shronnell Proctor, FF Tyler Liebno, and FF Matt Woodell.

I feel because of the training and experience of these men and former Elizabeth City Firefighters Wes Morgan and Kenneth Tarkington, as well as Camden VFD and other assisting Volunteer Fire Departments, the outcome was great. They performed such tasks as Entry and Extrication, cutting holes to remove corn and rigging for safety lines. The technical knowledge gained through training assisted in making good decisions that allowed us to remove the victims alive. It is very rare that a rescue of one individual trapped in a grain bin can be made let alone five individuals rescued. This was truly amazing.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Presentation of Mayoral Certificates of Recognition to Acting Deputy Chief Dale Smith, Deputy Chief Barry Overman, Captain Donald Porter, Captain Darren Saunders, Acting Captain Shane Christian, Engineer Dean Harris, Engineer Brad Owens, Firefighter Timmy Chesson, Firefighter Brian Hickman, Firefighter Shronnell Proctor, FF Tyler Liebno, and FF Matt Woodell.

RCO/vdw