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Smoke from Va., N.C. wildfires blowing into Sussex County

911 center taking numerous calls this morning

**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

**0930 Hours, Saturday
June 14, 2008**

The Sussex County Emergency Operations Center is fielding dozens of calls this morning from residents and others who report smelling smoke, the result of fires burning not locally but some 200 miles away in southeastern Virginia and eastern North Carolina.

EOC Director Joseph L. Thomas said 911 dispatchers have received nearly 50 calls at the center this morning, all of them to report the odor of smoke. The calls have come from across the county, particularly in the area stretching from Laurel to Bethany Beach.

“People are saying they smell smoke, that it smells like woods, smells like rubber burning, or that it smells electrical,” Mr. Thomas said. “But the smoke is not from fires in our area. These fires are hundreds of miles away, and because of the wind flow today, residents here are noticing it.”

According to the National Weather Service, south to southwest winds today are pushing smoke northward from wildfires in southeastern Virginia and eastern North Carolina. The smoke may blow as far north as New Jersey throughout the day, according to the weather service.

Mr. Thomas said the public should be away of today’s conditions, but he stressed that residents and visitors should still call 911 if they believe a fire is in their area.

The Sussex County EOC will continue to monitor the situation, and will issue any updates if they become necessary.

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