

# **Breaking News—Two Vehicle Traffic Accident in Fallston involving school children!!! Airbags deployed, Multiple Injuries!!! Report by Robert A. Williams**

The school traffic at Fallston Elementary School has been an accident waiting to happen. Well, around 3PM February 28, 2019 the accident happened. A big crash at the Elementary School exit. Just up the street from the scene of a dual fatality accident when a pickup truck went off the road, striking a propane tank causing an explosion that killed the two residents in the house.

This accident involved lots of traffic, obvious speeding in a 35 MPH zone, vehicles full of students and drivers involved. And a slow rain and overcast weather. All being a bad circumstance.

Fallston Fire Department was quickly on the scene. Followed shortly by several Sheriff's Department Deputies, four ambulances, later a Highway Patrolman arrived. Plus myself and other bystanders who respectfully stayed out of everybody's way as they quickly and professionally did their jobs.

I had crossed the street on foot and walked the sidewalk the short distance in a misty rain. The EMS loaded two adults and one child into ambulances from my vantage point. I did overhear where one parent heading to the hospital in a private vehicle, also took her child with her. I talked to the father of one of the drivers, a teenage girl who was trying to pull out from the school double exit when the accident happened. We

both marveled at how such an accident could have happened in a 35 MPH zone.

It appeared to me that the teenager had pulled out from the school exit heading West when she was struck by a vehicle heading east. Apparently at a speed too fast for conditions.

And the too fast for conditions is the problem here. Not only on the street where the Fallston School traffic exits school property onto E. Stagecoach Trail, but also on the entrance to Fallston School, right at my house. I see at least two traffic jams every school day. In the morning and at 3 PM. I make it a habit to back into my driveway so get out when I need to. And sometimes that is impossible due to two lanes of traffic at a standstill at my house. Several times I have been out grocery shopping and get stuck in traffic right in front of my house. On too occasions I have just parked my vehicle in the middle of the road, stuck in traffic, carried in my groceries and then came out when the traffic was moving again.

Also, besides the fatal accident just down the street a few years ago, once a vehicle travelling toward the Fallston stoplight in that 35 MPH zone right in front of my house the vehicle ran into the curb on the other side of the road, careened across the road and hit the power pole at the entrance to my house and Fallston School. The power pole was snapped off at the bottom and was only prevented from falling by the power wires that held it in an upright position.

And then there was the time a vehicle coming through Fallston in a similar 35 MPH Zone, heading South on NC 18, swerved to the right onto the sidewalk for some reason, hit a major power pole across from the old Stamey Store. The collision snapped off the power pole at the ground and also snapped off the pole about six foot off the ground. Literally knocking out a six-foot section of the pole. The pole end dropped to the sidewalk with the pole sticking straight up-looking almost like it was meant to be that way except for the dangling telephone and

cable wires. Fallston was in the dark most of the night because of that.

So, here we are. Two deaths, power outages, multiple injuries at the school that involve children all caused by bad traffic designs at and near Fallston School. All caused by speeding in a 35 MPH zone.

Isn't it about time to do something about this situation?

I can think of several solutions:

1. Enforce the speed limits in Fallston.
2. Have a Traffic Policeman on school days direct traffic into and out of Fallston School.
3. Encourage Fallston Elementary School Children ride the School Bus to minimize the excessive private vehicle traffic.
4. Lower the Speed limit on E. Stagecoach Road at the entrance and exit for Fallston School to 20 MPH and have a Sheriff's Deputy or Highway Patrol occasionally write some tickets.

I am sure there are other practical solutions. But the last thing most all of us citizens want to hear is that nothing is done by the time there is another accident and school students are again injured or worse.