

## Sheriff's statement on drowning

Written by Lauren Ohnesorge  
Tuesday, 26 June 2007 19:46

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Avery County Sheriff Kevin Frye issued the following statement yesterday regarding the Elk River drowning. "Our hearts go out to the family of Chad Hicks and they are and will continue to be in our prayers as they go through this difficult time. The family needs time to heal and make arrangements and I am asking that everyone respect their need for privacy during this time. I personally, along with the family of Chad Hicks, want to encourage those with the jurisdiction to do so to make every effort to make the Elk River Falls area below the falls off limits to swimming. After speaking with several of the divers and rescue workers it is apparent that this area is extremely dangerous for recreational swimming. The debris and currents make it very difficult for even the most experienced swimmers. We have lost several young people either swimming or diving in this area and I feel now is the time to make every effort to stop the swimming in this area. I also personally want to thank, as do Chad's parents, each and every person who worked at helping this family get some closure in this tragic incident. Chad's family especially wishes to thank the Avery County Rescue Squad for helping them and allowing them to use the rescue squad base to stay at during the rescue and recovery efforts."

Agencies involved in the recovery efforts were:

Avery County Rescue Squad and Dive Team  
McDowell Fire and Rescue Dive Team  
Linville/Central Rescue Squad

Search and Rescue Dog Team  
Elk Park Volunteer Fire Department  
PG Fire Department  
Fall Creek Volunteer Fire Department  
Watauga Rescue  
Frank Volunteer Fire Department

Blowing Rock Rescue  
Banner Elk Volunteer Fire Department  
NC Emergency Management  
Crossnore Volunteer Fire Department  
Asheville Fire and Rescue Dive Team  
Newland Volunteer Fire Department  
Avery Communications  
Linville Volunteer Fire Department

Burke County Sheriff's Office Dive Team  
Green Valley Volunteer Fire Department  
Burke County Air Truck  
Avery County Sheriff's Office

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Spruce Pine Fire and Rescue  
Carter County Rescue Squad

US Forest Service  
Lenoir Fire and Rescue

Bristol Dive Team  
Hudson Fire and Rescue

Washington County Dive/Swift Water Team  
North Catawba Fire and Rescue  
Parkway Fire and Rescue  
Gamewell Fire and Rescue Swift Water Team

Agency information was obtained from a statement released yesterday by the Avery County Sheriff's Office.