James B. Hunt Jr., Governor

Bill Holman, Secretary

N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Release: Immediate
Date: May 24, 2000 Distribution: Targeted

*** MEDIA ADVISORY ***

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STATE AGENCIES WORK WITH BUSINESSES TO IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

WHAT: Two state agencies have partnered to work with North Carolina businesses that manufacture parts for the automotive industry to help them meet a mandate to improve environmental performance. To begin work, the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Commerce will host a workshop (ISO 14001 EMS: the Nuts and Bolts of Getting it Done) teaching suppliers to the automotive industry how to implement an Environmental Management System (EMS). EMS is a tool that uses an international standard (ISO 14001) to systematically manage environmental activities, products, and services and to help achieve environmental obligations and performance goals. Automotive suppliers are implementing an EMS as part of a mandate from automotive companies such as Ford and General Motors (GM). GM manufacturing suppliers have until Dec. 31, 2002, to implement an EMS; Ford suppliers have until July 1, 2003. Both companies are making the requirement because of their interest in improving the quality of the environment, and suppliers share the same concern. The new requirement will apply to about 5,000 of their manufacturing suppliers worldwide. Small manufacturers also will participate in the workshop.

Speakers include Bob Devlin, Ford Motor Co., Dearborn, Mich.; Chris Kappert, Konica Manufacturing USA, Whitsett; Joe Fleming, Philips Communications Security & Imaging Inc., Winston-Salem.

WHEN: 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Thurs., **May 25**

WHERE: Grady P. Swisher Center, 1251 Dudley Products Drive, **Kernersville** (Satellite Campus of Forsyth Technical Community College)

COMMENTS: In North Carolina, manufacturers of automotive components such as tires, door paneling, cushion coverings, gaskets, and other components are a significant percentage of our state industrial and economic base. Companies that have implemented programs have reported benefits ranging from enhanced compliance, improved employee morale, and savings from pollution prevention activities.

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