

HOW & WHY TO USE: SAFESUPERVISOR'S FATALITY FILES

Work-related deaths are still far too common, even with all the progress that's been made in creating safer workplaces and the adoption of OHS laws designed to protect workers and hold employers accountable for workplace safety.

What makes many of these deaths even more tragic is the fact they could have easily been prevented.

Keep your workers from becoming a fatality file; use these stories of work-related deaths and the lessons learned as part of your training program.

Fatality files are grim, but impactful reminders of how quickly things can go wrong, how dangerous work can be, and how easily a life could have been saved.

When paired with a safety talk and quiz, a fatality file can be an extremely effective tool in frontline safety training. For more resources to improve the resonance and retention of your safety message with frontline staff, go to www.safesupervisor.com.

FATALITY FILES

Injured Carpenter Dies Driving to Hospital

THE CASE

The death of 27-year-old Octavio Godinez is a lesson to everyone on the job – don't drive while impaired by injury.

The carpenter from Fort Wayne, IN, was working at a home in Coosaw Creek, SC, when he suffered a puncture wound to his wrist. A co-worker (his father-in-law) had left the jobsite to get supplies, so Godinez was alone and bleeding heavily. In a state of panic, he made the decision to drive himself to a nearby hospital, where his father-in-law agreed to meet him. But Godinez lost control of his pickup truck and struck a tree. A lack of skid marks led police to believe that the driver may have been unconscious prior to the collision.

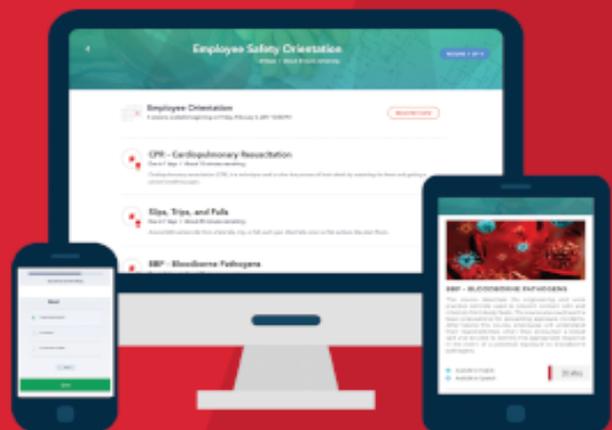
An autopsy revealed that Godinez died from a ruptured heart (as a result of the crash) and loss of blood from his wrist wound. He leaves behind a wife and a son.

FINAL WORD

Supervisors should make it clear to all lone workers that they should not operate a motor vehicle while injured. In addition, supervisors should ensure that employees not work alone if at all possible. Employees who have to work alone should be equipped with radio communication or a frequent

call-in system that lets supervisors know they are safe.

THE FASTEST PATH TO SAFETY AWESOME



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FATALITY FILES

A Heat Stress Tragedy: The Tale of Anthony Dalton

THE CASE

This is not hyperbole. Here's an example of how education—or the lack thereof—led to a heat stress death. While this story starts 25 years ago in Newfoundland in the spring of 1992, the message is still relevant today. Anthony Dalton and Ronald Morrissey are trained boilermakers and good friends. They decide to take a job in New Brunswick repairing pipes in a paper mill. Here's a chronicle of what came next:

May 20, 1992: Dalton and Morrissey report for their first day of work. The temperatures outside are high for May—22° C (94° F) and 35% humidity. It's even hotter in the mill where chemicals are heated in enclosed spaces—especially on the scaffolds where Dalton and Morrissey are working. Nobody tells them anything about the dangers of heat stress. Later, the contractor will testify that he assumed that trained boilermakers would know all about heat stress. It turns out to be a tragically flawed assumption.

Dalton and Morrissey work all day in the heat. Dalton starts experiencing fatigue. It's the first warning of danger. But since neither man knows anything about the signs of heat stress, it goes unrecognized.

May 21, 1992: The outdoor temperature has climbed to 28.5° C (99° F). Humidity is at 33%. The heat and hard work in the mill continue. Dalton and Morrissey work the entire day. Dalton is getting worse. When

the two get back to their motel after work, Dalton starts experiencing muscle cramps. He's exhausted. He passes out on the bathroom floor of the motel room. He drinks a beer, not realizing that the last thing somebody in his condition should do is drink alcohol.

May 22, 1992: It's even hotter today—30.5° C (101° F). Dalton is still exhausted but decides to drag himself to work. He spends the morning inside one of the tanks helping to build a scaffold. He's in big trouble. After afternoon break, he tells the supervisor that he's just too exhausted to go back to work. He sits on the floor with his back against the base of a column. When the shift ends, he can barely stand up. He's incoherent. He stumbles about 100 metres (330 feet) and finally collapses. Even now, nobody knows what's wrong. The ambulance takes Dalton to the hospital. But it's too late. Dalton dies of heat stroke the next day.

FINAL WORD

Perhaps the saddest part of the death of Anthony Dalton is that it could have been prevented. There was ample warning. Anybody attuned to the signs of heat stress would have recognized what was going on and acted while there was still time. Tragically, because none of the workers or supervisors with whom Dalton worked had received any education on heat stress, every opportunity to save him was missed.

FATALITY FILES

Worker Falls Headfirst from Raised Forklift Platform

THE CASE

A 23-year-old male maintenance employee and an associate were installing steel panels between gun powder hoppers. The gun powder was ignited resulting in an explosion that caused one fatality, one critically injured, and two seriously injured employees.

Two maintenance employees were installing ¼ inch thick steel panels between gun powder hoppers. The panels were approximately 6 ½ feet long by 2 feet wide and were intended for fire propagation prevention.

The victim was using a battery powered drill, not approved for explosive atmospheres. While doing so, gun powder was ignited during the drilling process resulting in a flash fire and explosion.

The building was severely damaged from the explosion, large structural pieces and metal siding was observed lying on the ground more than 50 feet from the building.

Both maintenance employees and two additional employees were sent to the hospital. The victim died later that day at the hospital from massive internal injuries. One employee lost his left eye and two fingers on his left hand. The two other employees received cuts and lacerations from flying debris and shrapnel.

FINAL WORD

The employer was cited for, among other things, not implementing safe operating procedures, not having/implementing written procedures to manage changes, not documenting inspections and tests, and not issuing a hot work permit.



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WHY CHOOSE US?

"SafeSupervisor saves me time, especially when I have difficulty putting an idea into words to present to others. There are a ton of resources that I can use to keep employees engaged in our regular safety training."

Ron Thomas
Health & Safety Director

HOW TO GET STARTED

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A thick red L-shaped graphic that frames the central text. It consists of a horizontal line at the top, a vertical line on the right, and a horizontal line at the bottom, with a vertical line on the left side that is shorter than the others.

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