



UNITED STEELWORKERS OF AMERICA
HEALTH, SAFETY and ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
FATALITY REPORT - 1999
January 1 – December 31, 1999

This report is a summary of thirty-four fatalities reported to the USWA Health, Safety and Environment Department for January 1 through December 31, 1999.

- ◆ 30 USWA members died in accidents that occurred in 1999, along with one supervisor.
- ◆ One additional USWA member died of a heart attack at work (non-occupational).
- ◆ This report also includes an accident that killed two employees in a non-union mine. These accidents are included because they resulted from hazards to those faced by USWA members.
- ◆ The causes of death in these incidents were as follows:

12	getting caught in or between	4	burns
12	struck by	1	electrocution
4	falls	1	heart attack
- ◆ The type of equipment, process or working area that contributed to these accidents was:

13	fixed machinery	9	other mobile equipment
3	conveyors	3	falls of ground
5	cranes	4	walking and working surfaces

Since some accidents have more than one cause, the number will be larger than thirty-four.
- ◆ The distribution of these fatalities by industry was:

13	steel (excluding iron ore)	1	construction
8	mining	1	nonferrous metals
4	fabricated metals	1	metal hardware
3	rubber & plastics	2	foundry
1	chemical		

- ◆ Of the thirty-four fatalities, there were thirty-two men and two women. Their ages ranged from 22 to 61; nine were Canadian.
- ◆ This report does not necessarily include all fatalities at USWA worksites in 1999, only those reported to the department. Some employers are required by the union contract to report fatalities; in other cases, the information was sent voluntarily by the employer, the staff representative or local union. This report also does not contain information on deaths from occupational disease. These deaths often occur after retirement; many are not recognized as being caused by a condition at work. However, research has shown that for every worker who dies in an industrial accident, eight to ten die from long-term occupational disease.
- ◆ The eight miners killed represents 24 percent of the fatalities, while the miners only represent 8 percent of the total USWA membership.

We have detailed descriptions of some of these accidents, along with a list of recommendations. We have less information on others. If you would like a copy of the available information on any of these accidents, please write to:

UNITED STEELWORKERS OF AMERICA
HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
FIVE GATEWAY CENTER
PITTSBURGH, PA 15222
412-562-2581; 2584 (Fax)
email: safety@uswa.org

Accident reports are very important. Other local unions can use them to prevent similar accidents. If a USWA member, supervisor or contractor is killed at your facility, or dies of an occupational disease, please notify us as soon as possible, and send the company or local union investigation report when it becomes available.

1. On January 6, **James Rothecker**, 22, a miner at **Province Saskatchewan Potash Corp.** in **Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada**, was killed when he was crushed by a rock fall while working in an underground mine. Brother Rathecher was a member of **Local Union 7458 in District 3**.

2&3. On January 12, **Clermont Despres**, 49, and **Jacques Gilbert**, 56, miners at **Ivaco, Inc.; Infasco Division** in **Marieville, Quebec, Canada**, died after an explosion occurred on a roof of a building where they were trying to de-ice frozen pipes. Brothers Despres and Gilbert were members of **Local 6839 in District 5**.

4. On January 12, **Arthur Bradbury**, 56, a supervisor at **Smoky River Coal, Ltd.** in **Grande Cache, Alberta, Canada**, was killed when he was pulled into a conveyor belt. **Bargaining unit employees** at the Smoky River Mine are represented by **Local Union 7621-01 in District 3**.

5. On January 12, **Sonny Peacock**, 54, an electrician at **McWane, Inc.** in **Phillipsburg, New Jersey**, was killed when he was struck by an overhead crane and crushed between the crane bridging and a conveyor belt. Brother Peacock was a member of **Local Union 9404 in District 4**.

6. On January 27, **Eddie LaBuda**, 61, a forklift operator at **Johnstown Wire Technologies** in **Johnstown, Pennsylvania**, was fatally injured when a steel coil he had just stacked fell on him, pinning him to the floor. He died the next day. Brother LaBuda was a member of **Local Union 2635 in District 10**.

7. On April 5, **Elizabeth Balentine**, 40, an employee of **Wise Alloys** in **Sheffield, Alabama**, was killed when the floor plate she was standing on fell into a pit near a slitter. Sister Balentine was a member of **Local Union 200 in District 9**.

8. On April 6, **Joseph Lascak**, 35, a miner at non-union **Kinross Hoyle Pond Gold Mine** in **Timmins, Ontario, Canada**, was killed while working on top of a rock-filled millhole, when the millhole muck was accidentally released from below. This unit is located in **District 6**.

9. On April 7, **James Plummer**, 55, an employee of **Inco Limited** in **Copper Cliff, Ontario, Canada**, was killed while blasting an oversized piece of rock that would not fit into the jaw crusher. Brother Plummer was a member of **Local Union 6500-01 in District 6**.

10. On April 9, **Shirley Davis**, 47, a door machine operator at **Tonawanda Coke Corp.** in **Tonawanda, New York**, was killed when she was crushed between a coke oven door and a beam, when the door was accidentally activated. Sister Davis was a member of **Local Union 4447-05 in District 4**.

11. On April 19, **Patrick Nice**, 51, a truck driver at **Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Corporation** in **Martins Ferry, Ohio**, was killed while driving a load of steel coils between plants, after losing control of his truck. The load shifted, causing one of the two coils of steel to smash the cab of the truck. Brother Nice was a member of **Local 1238 in District 1**.

12. On May 12, **Gary Allison**, 61, an electrician at **Oregon Steel Mills, Inc.; CF&I Steel in Pueblo, Colorado**, was killed by shrapnel from a disintegrating drive gear coupling which was attached to an electric arc furnace electrode support arm. The shrapnel hit him in the head, face and neck, resulting in his death. Brother Allison was a member of **Local 2102-02 in District 12**.

13. On May 16, **Gary J. Hogan**, 34, a laborer at **D'Annunzio & Sons, Inc. in Clark, New Jersey**, was killed when run over by a truck. Brother Hogan was a member of **Local 15024-33 in District 4**.

14. On May 17, **Erick Johnson**, 28, a bander at **The Steel Company in Stony Island, Chicago, Illinois**, was fatally injured when crushed by a master coil that slid off a cart. He died from his injuries on the way to the hospital. Brother Johnson was a member of **Local 5544-24 in District 7**.

15. On May 25, **Donald McIntosh**, 44, an assemblyman at **Smithco Engineering Inc. in Tulsa, Oklahoma**, was killed when a heat exchanger ruptured, striking him in the chest. Brother McIntosh was a member of **Local Union 7570 in District 12**.

16. On June 2, **Arthur H. Tooles**, 59, a burning machine operator at **Bethlehem Steel Corp. in Coatesville, Pennsylvania**, was injured while using east hoist magnet on remote crane to replace center grates. The magnet struck his ankle, pinning it against sidewall of table. He died five days later due to complications from amputation of the ankle. Brother Tooles was a member of **Local 1165 in District 10**.

17. On June 20, **Joseph W. Fadeley**, 39, a crane operator at **Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Corp. in Mingo Junction, Ohio**, was killed when he fell 130 feet from an overhead crane or walkway into an empty steel ladle. Brother Fadeley was a member of **Local Union 1190-01 in District 1**.

18. On June 21, **Daniel Droe**, 53, a finish operator at **BTR PLC. in Keokuk, Iowa**, was fatally burned when a hot salt bath curing process pipe or vessel exploded. Brother Droe was a member of **Local Union 444L in District 11**.

19. On July 14, **Richard Worstine**, 48, a tire builder at **Cooper Tire & Rubber in Findlay, Ohio**, was killed when the machine he was making a tool adjustment on started up, pinning him in the machine. Brother Worstine was a member of **Local Union 207L in District 1**.

20. On July 17, **Randy Williams**, 42 a senior vacuum operator at **Renco Group, Inc.; Magnesium Corporation of America** in **Rowley, Utah**, was killed when he was involved in a truck/motorcycle accident while on company property. Brother Williams was a member of **Local Union 8319 in District 12**.

21. On July 20, **Glenn Parret**, 48, an electrician at **Bridgestone/Firestone Inc.** in **Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**, was electrocuted while working on emergency lighting in a warehouse. Glen Parret was a member of the Operating Engineers. **Bargaining unit employees** at Dayton Tire are represented by **Local Union 998L in District 12**.

22. On July 25, **Gerald Gorman**, 61, a plant repairman at **Cleveland-Cliffs, Inc.; Empire Mine** in **Palmer, Michigan**, was killed when he stepped into the path of a front-end loader. Brother Gorman was a member of **Local Union 4950-01 in District 2**.

23. On August 10, **Howard Benjamin**, 48, a forklift operator at **Gregory Galvanizing & Metal Processing Inc.** in **Canton, Ohio**, was killed when a load of steel fell off a forklift, striking him. Brother Benjamin was a member of **Local Union 5439-03 in District 1**.

24. On August 10, **Roosevelt Stephens**, 58, a maintenance technician at **LTV Steel** in **East Chicago, Indiana**, was fatally injured when he was pinned between a moving charge car and an emission control car he was repairing. Brother Stephens was a member of **Local Union 1011 in District 7**.

25. On August 12, **Charles Gurschke**, 50, a tool room machinist at **John Gillien Company** in **Cicero, Illinois**, was struck and killed by a bar, while operating a lathe. Brother Gurschke was a member of **Local Union 9777-33 in District 7**.

26. On September 8, **Alvin Jennings**, 42, a scoop tram operator at **Brunswick Mines (Noranda Mining and Exploration)** in **Bathurst, New Brunswick, Canada**, was killed in an underground mining accident, caused by the failure of an “ore pass door”. Brother Jennings was a member of **Local Union 5385 in District 6**.

27. On September 18, **Richard Slater**, 44, an electrician at **Northwestern Steel and Wire Co.** in **Sterling, Illinois**, was killed when he fell 18 feet from an overhead crane that he was repairing. Brother Slater was a member of **Local Union 63 in District 7**.

28. On September 21, **Carl Simpson**, 38, a dry sand press operator at **InterMet Corp.; Ironton Iron Inc.** in **Ironton, Ohio**, was killed while trying to remove tools from a press when the machine started up. Brother Simpson was a member of **Local Union 3664 in District 1**.

29. On September 26, **Robert Parker**, 43, an employee of **Citation Maryon** in **Marion, Alabama**, was killed when he fell from a skip bucket. Robert Parker was not a union member. **Bargaining unit employees are members of Local Union 9361 in District 9.**

30. On September 28, **James W. White**, 46, a process employee at **Uniroyal Goodrich** in **Tuscaloosa, Alabama**, died of a heart attack while at work. Brother White was a member of **Local Union 351 in District 9.**

31. On October 7, **Robert Palastro**, 48, an employee of **Allegheny Teledyne, Steel Div.** in **Brackenridge, Pennsylvania**, was fatally burned, when molten metal erupted from a ladle striking him. Brother Palastro was a member of **Local Union 1196-01 in District 10.**

32. On October 12, **Jamie Brown**, 23, a crane operator at **McWane Inc.; Clow Water Systems Div.** in **Coshocton, Ohio**, was killed when he was caught between the drum and the cable of an overhead crane. Brother Brown was a member of **Local Union 7014 in District 1.**

33. On November 23, **Maurice Lemay**, 49, a truck driver at **LAB Crysotile Inc.** in **Black Lake, Quebec, Canada**, was killed when his truck ran out of control. Brother Lamay was a member of **Local Union 7649 in District 5.**

34. On December 14, **Bob Henderson**, 52, an employee of **Pirelli SPA (Italy); Pirelli Cables Systems, Inc.** in **Surrey, British Columbia, Canada**, was fatally injured when he was caught in a cable reeling machine. He died seven days later. Brother Henderson was a member of **Local Union 2952-79 in District 3.**