

2012 FATALITY REPORT

January 1st – October 24, 2012

This report is a summary of 27 fatalities in USW workplaces between January 1 and October 24, 2012 as reported to the USW Health, Safety and Environment Department. Two additional fatalities of interest at other workplaces are also included.

The report does not necessarily include all fatalities at USW workplaces, only those reported to the department. Some employers are required to report by the union contract; in other cases, the information was sent voluntarily by the employer, the USW staff representative, or the local union. The reporting is likely better for members than for supervisors, contractors and other non-members.

USW fatality reports rarely 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.

Accident reports are very important. Other local unions can use them to prevent similar accidents. If a USW member, supervisor, contractor, member of another union, or non-union worker is killed at your facility, or dies of an occupational disease, please notify us as soon as possible. In the United States, that should be done through the USW's 24-hr Emergency Response Hotline, at **1-866-526-3480**. In Canada, please notify both your district director and the Canadian National Office.

ANALYSIS

Four (4) of the twenty-seven (27) fatalities in USW workplaces are not included in the analysis that follows. Three were heart attacks not believed to have been caused by events at work immediately preceding the death. The other was believed, by county police, to have been a suicide.

Twenty-one (21) of the remaining twenty-three (23) victims were members of the USW. Two (2) were contractors.

Distribution by industry: 5 steel; 5 paper/pulp; 1 nonferrous; 2 aluminum; 4 woods; 1 miscellaneous; 1 cement; 1 glass; 1 non-metallic; 1 transportation; 1 mining; 1 construction; 2 private sector.

Distribution by district: District 1 – member 1; District 2 – member 1, other 2; District 3 – 5 members; District 4 – 1; District 5 –; District 6 – 2 members; District 7 – 1 member; District 8 – 4 members; District 9 –; District 10 – 3 members; District 11 – 2 members; District 12 – 2 members; District 13 – 2 members.

Some of these accidents are still under investigation, so this report should be considered preliminary.

1. January 20, **Carl Charlie**, 42, an employee of **Babine Forest Products** located in **Burns Lake, British Columbia** was fatality injured due to an explosion and fire at the mill. He was a member of **Local Union 1-424** in **District 3**.

2. January 20, **Robert Luggi, Jr.**, 45, an employee of **Babine Forest Products** located in **Burns Lake, British Columbia** was fatality injured due to an explosion and fire at the mill. He was a member of **Local Union 1-424** in **District 3**.
3. January 22, **Patrick (Pat) Pacuch**, 52, an employee of **Allegheny Ludlum** located in **Brackenridge, PA** was fatality injured while at work. County police believed death to have been a suicide. He was a member of **Local Union 1196** in **District 10**.
4. January 27, **Herman Weaver**, 69, an employee of **Holcim Cement, Inc.** located in **Hagerstown, Maryland** was fatality injured while cleaning a tailpiece with a skid steer loader. He backed the loader in a drainage ditch, traveled in reverse about 150 feet, and went into a 5½-foot deep water hole. He was a member of **Local Union 8-33** in **District 8**.
5. January 29, **Stephen Perry**, 47, an employee of **Vale Coleman Mine** located in **Levack, Ontario** was fatality injured loading the face of the rock with explosives, from a man-basket, when an incident occurred. He was a member of **Local Union 6500** in **District 6**.
6. February 3, **Mitch Arthur**, 55, an employee of **Scepter, Inc.** located in **Bicknell, Indiana** was fatality injured while working on a man lift in an upward motion to repair a furnace and he was crushed between the ceiling and man lift. He was a member of **Local Union 331U** in **District 7**.
7. February 8, **Ronald Clapperton**, 62, an employee of **Gerdau Corporation** located in **Rancho Cucamonga, California** was found on the shop floor unresponsive. He was taken to the hospital, where he later died. He was a member of **Local Union 8065** in **District 12**.
8. February 15, **Noe Guerrero, Jr.**, 33, an employee of **Sherwin Alumina** located in **Gregory, Texas**, collapsed and died while at work due to a heart attack. He was a member of **Local Union 235A** in **District 13**.
9. February 28, **Jeff Ross**, 56, an employee of **GrafTech** located in **Clarksburg, West Virginia**, was fatally injured while at work. Details surrounding his death are unknown at this time. He was a member of **Local Union 8-276** in **District 8**.
10. April 23, **Raymond Duran**, 58, an employee of **Evrax Steel** located in **Pueblo, Colorado**, was fatality injured when he was ran over by a fork truck. He was a member of **Local Union 2102** in **District 11**.
11. May 3, **George Park, Jr.**, was fatality injured while working at **Canadian Forest Products** located in **Vanderhoof, British Columbia**. The circumstances surrounding his death are unknown at this time. He was a member of **Local Union 1-424** in **District 3**.
12. May 17, **Tim Martins**, 48, an employee of **Swissport Canada Handling, Inc.**, located in **Mississauga, Ontario** was fatality injured while unloading an airplane. He was crushed between a belt loader and the aircraft he was loading. He was a member of **Local Union 7536** in **District 6**.

13. May 18, **Jeff Troester**, an employee of **Arcelor Mittal** located in **Conshohocken, Pennsylvania** was fatality injured while working on a railroad care when a roll of paper shifted and fell on him. He was a member of **Local Union 9462** located in **District 10**.

14. May 28, **Jon Maus**, 50, an employee of **Verso Paper** located in **Sartell, Minnesota** was fatality injured due to an air compressor/receiver tank explosion. He was a member of **Local Union 274** in **District 11**.

15. May 30, **Debbie Carlson**, 53, an employee of **Manistique Paper** located in **Manistique, Michigan** was fatality injured while driving a fork truck transferring bails of waste paper from a cement slab at an outside storage area. As Debbie was backing away from the lower bails with the forks still elevated, one of the fork truck tires went off a crack in the concrete slab. The concrete had previously cracked and there was a 1 and 1/8th drop in the surface where the tire went off. Going off the drop with the forks and load still raised caused the fork truck to tip over pinning Debbie under the roll cage of the truck. She was a member of **Local Union 2-44** in **District 2**.

16-17. July 18, **Dennis Jay Gougeon**, 47, a contractor employed by **Inland Systems, Inc.**, was fatally injured and **Dustin Hale**, 29, also a contractor, was seriously injured while working at **PCA** located in **Bradley, Wisconsin**, while cleaning an ash vessel when they were burned by fly ash. Dustin Hale died 7/28/12 as a result of his injuries. Bargaining unit employees are represented by **Local Union 2-248** in **District 2**.

18. June 19, **Harry Lilley**, 62, an employee of **Gerresheimer Glass** located in **Vineland, New Jersey** had a possible heart attack while at work. Although it was considered natural causes, he was working at a high pace of work in 98 degree heat for 6 hours. He was a member of **Local Union 701** in **District 4**.

19. June 25, **Rex Wilcoxson**, 45, an employee of **AC&S** located in **Nitro, West Virginia**, was seriously injured when his sandblast suit's line was connected to nitrogen instead of oxygen. He later died 7/1/12 from his injuries. He was a member of **Local Union 4741** in **District 8**.

20. June 25, **Danny Contreras**, 54, an employee of **U.R.S.**, located in **Carlsband, New Mexico**, was fatally injured when the truck he was driving was hit by an oncoming tractor trailer head on. The impact caused both vehicles to catch fire. Brother Contreras truck was crushed and burned beyond recognition. He was a member of **Local Union 12-9477** in **District 12**.

21. August 6, **Becky Mitchell**, 50, an employee of **Glatfelter Paper** located in **Chillicothe, Ohio**, was fatally injured when the bulldozer she was operating caught fire. As she was exiting the machine she got caught in the moving track and was killed. She was a member **Local Union 731** in **District 1**.

22. August 11, **Bernard Lenhardt**, 59, an employee of **BAE Systems** located in **York, Pennsylvania**, was fatality injured while at work. He was a member of **Local Union 7687** in **District 10**.
23. August 13, **Chris Reid**, 28, an employee of **PotashCorp** located in **Allan, Saskatoon** was fatally injured while underground. He was a member of **Local Union 7689** in **District 3**.
24. September 9, **Johnnie “Bert” Bussey**, 59, an employee of **Unimen Corporation** located in **Glen Rose, Texas**, was found in his pickup truck outside the control room, apparent heart attack. He was a member of **Local Union 780** in **District 13**.
25. September 13, **Toby Childs**, 38, an employee of **Lemare Lake Logging** located in **Northern Vancouver Island**, he was fatally injured when he was struck by a large branch that fell from a large cedar tree while he was falling timber. He was a member of **Local Union 1-1937** in **District 3**.
26. October 3, **David James**, 58, an employee of **Dover Corp., Norris Rods** located in **Tulsa, Oklahoma**, was in the first half hour of his shift when he had a massive heart attack or stroke; he was pronounced dead at the hospital. He was a member of **Local Union 4430** in **District 13**.
27. October 10, **Billy Phillips, Sr.**, 65, an employee of **Elmo Greener, Inc.**, located in **Manchester, Kentucky**, was fatally injured while at work. The details surrounding the accident are not known at this time. He was a member of **Local Union 14581** in **District 8**.

FATALITIES OF INTEREST IN NON-USW REPRESENTED WORKPLACES

These are included because the company employs a large number of USW members at other locations, or because we have attempted to organize the location in the past. However the list is not inclusive; we have not attempted to collect all such fatalities.

28. January 30, **Michael M. Shoemaker**, 55, a conductor and member of **UTU Local 1383**, was fatally injured in a switching accident at **U.S. Steel’s Gary Works**. Reports are that he was wedged between two freight cars. He was a 10-year employee, of **Gary Railway**, which is owned by **U.S. Steel**. Reports indicate he was working as a foreman in a three-person conventional switching operation when the car he was riding “impacted the side of the standing equipment that the crew had placed” on an adjacent track, pinning him.
29. June 8, **Scott Bates**, 41, a steelworker employed by **Canam Steel** located in **Claremont, New Hampshire**, which makes girders and arches for large bridges, was fatally injured while trying to load a large steel span onto a trailer when he was pinned beneath its wheels.

*USW Health, Safety and Environment Department
5 Gateway Center, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
(412) 562-2581; (412) 562-2584 (fax)*

safety@usw.org

