

UNITED STEELWORKERS OF AMERICA
HEALTH, SAFETY and ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
FATALITY REPORT - 1998
January 1 – December 31, 1998

This report is a summary of 43 fatalities reported to the USWA Health, Safety and Environment Department for January 1 through December 31, 1998.

- ◆ 30 USWA members died in accidents that occurred in 1998 along with three supervisors, six outside contractors and two non-union employee in a USWA represented plant.
- ◆ This report also includes accidents that killed one employee of another union working in a USWA-represented plant and one employee in a non-union steel plant. 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:

19	getting caught in or between	3	falls
7	contact with temperature extremes	12	struck by
2	breathing toxic chemicals		
- ◆ The type of equipment, process or working area that contributed to these accidents was:

15	fixed machinery	6	other mobile equipment
3	conveyors	8	falls of ground
7	lockout	3	cranes
2	railroad train	3	toxic chemicals

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

19	steel (excluding iron ore)	2	foundry
11	mining	1	rubber & plastics
2	industrial machinery	1	paper mill
3	chemical	1	pottery products
2	nonmetallic products	1	nonferrous metals
- ◆ Of the forty-three fatalities, forty were men and three were women. Their ages ranged from 19 to 63; ten were Canadian.

- ◆ This report does not necessarily include all fatalities at USWA worksites for the second half of 1998, 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, ten die from long-term occupational disease.
- ◆ The eleven miners killed represents 26 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&2. On January 16, **Wayne Campbell**, 41, and **Darrell Ralph**, 43, underground miners at **Quinsam Coal Corporation** in **Campbell River, British Columbia, Canada**, died when they were crushed by a fall of 800 tons of rock. Brothers Campbell and Ralph were members of **Local Union 9347 in District 3**.

3. On January 17, **Hector Pabon**, 36, an employee of **Waste Management Inc.**, a waste removal company, was killed when he was crushed between a dumpster and the loading dock at **Dunlop Tire & Rubber Corp.** in **Huntsville, Alabama**. **Bargaining unit employees** at Dunlop Tire are members of **Local Union 915L in District 9**.

4. On January 27, **Tom Huff**, 47, an underground miner at the **Sunshine Mine** in **Kellogg, Idaho**, was killed when he fell while working at the collar of a shaft. Brother Huff was a member of **Local Union 5089 in District 11**.

5. On February 4, **Jacques “Jack” Frenett**, 43, an underground miner at the **Brunswick Mining & Smelting Company** in **Bathurst, New Brunswick, Canada**, was killed

when he was struck and pinned by a falling one-and-a-half-ton rock. Brother Frenett was a member of **Local Union 5385 in District 6.**

6. On February 9, **Joseph “Joe” Cote**, 41, an underground miner, was killed when a 5-ton scoop tram pinned him between the bucket and a tractor he was loading. He was employed at **Detour Lake/Placer Dome Mine in Timmins, Ontario, Canada.** Brother Cote was a member of **Local Union 9171 in District 6.**

7. On February 13, **Matt Huzyak**, a 25-year-old helper at **Moltrup Steel in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania**, was fatally injured in the first 10 minutes of his first day on this job, when he attempted to unjam a pipe and was pulled into the moving rolls. Matt Huzyak was a member of **Local Union 1202 in District 10.**

8. On February 19, **Ronald E. Clarke**, 50, an employee of **Bethlehem Steel in Burns Harbor, Indiana**, was killed when he was attempting to repair a spring-loaded roll-up door that was installed horizontally over a tundish pit. Tension in the door let loose and catapulted him 35 feet into the pit. Brother Clarke was a member of **Local Union 6787 in District 7.**

9. On February 24, **Dennis Morriseau**, 32, a miner at **Minorco (Luxembourg); Minorco (USA); Hudson Bay Mining & Smelting (Ruttan Operations) in Leaf Rapids, Manitoba, Canada**, was killed when an ore pass he was working on collapsed and fatally injured him. Brother Morriseau was a member of **Local Union 8144 in District 3.**

10. On March 4, **Arlo Wade**, a 47-year-old underground miner at **BHP Copper Mine in San Manuel, Arizona**, was killed when a slab of rock fell from the roof of the mine. Brother Wade was a member of **Local Union 937 in District 12.**

11. On March 12, **Romano Diaz**, 19, an employee of **Central Valley Construction**, an outside contractor at **USS-POSCO in Pittsburg, California**, was killed when he was run over by a backhoe. **Bargaining unit employees** at USS-POSCO are members of **Local Union 1440 in District 12.**

12. On March 18, **Michael Jess**, 30, a mechanical millwright at **Dominion Castings in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada**, was fatally injured when a shot blast machine he was working on reactivated and pulled him in. Brother Jess was a member of **Local Union 9392 in District 6.**

13. On March 25, **James Mercer, 48**, a refinery worker at **Newfoundland Energy, Ltd.; North Atlantic Refining Ltd., Sub**, in Come-By-Chance, **Newfoundland, Canada**, was seriously burned as the result of an explosion. He died on March 28. Brother Mercer was a member of **Local Union 9316 in District 6**.

14. On March 25, **Jerome Kieley, 49**, a refinery worker at **Newfoundland Energy, Ltd.; North Atlantic Refining Ltd., Sub**, in Come-By-Chance, **Newfoundland, Canada**, was seriously burned as the result of an explosion. He died on April 3. Brother Kieley was a member of **Local Union 9316 in District 6**.

15. On April 5, **Sam Burch**, a 46-year-old supervisor at **National Steel in Granite City, Illinois**, was killed when he was pulled between a conveyor belt and a structural member of the conveyor. **Bargaining unit employees** in that area of the plant are represented by the United Food and Commercial Workers. **USWA Local Unions 16, 30, 67, 68 and 9325 in District 7** represent the majority of workers at Granite City Steel.

16. On April 23, **Crystal Johnson, 35**, an employee of **Republic Engineered Steels in Gary, Indiana**, was killed when she was struck by bars that were traveling on a roll conveyor. Sister Johnson was a member of **Local Union 3069 in District 7**.

17. On May 3, **Thomas P. Chelle, 56**, a supervisor at **US Steel in Gary, Indiana**, was killed when he was struck by a bulldozer. **Bargaining unit employees** at US Steel are members of **Local Union 1014 in District 7**.

18. On May 13, **Herb Parker, 63**, an employee of **Beatty Machine & Mfg. Co. in Hammond, Indiana**, was fatally injured when his legs were pinned by breaker block shifting while being lifted by a crane. Brother Parker was a member of **Local Union 1010 in District 7**.

19. On May 13, **Larry D. Stubblefield, 40**, an employee of **USX in Gary, Indiana**, was killed when he was struck by a rail remote train while passing between cars to observe for safety reasons where deflected iron from a ladle was going. Brother Stubblefield was a member of **Local Union 1014 in District 7**.

20. On May 29, **Dennis Pintur, 50**, an employee of **USS/Kobe in Lorain, Ohio**, was fatally injured while helping to free a hung-up bloom on the bloom caster. He had been pinned between the bloom and the dummy bar. Brother Pintur was a member of **Local Union 1104 in District 1**.

21. On June 4, **John Yinger, 50**, a supervisor at **Bethlehem Steel in Steelton, Pennsylvania**, was burned over 70 percent of his body when a reaction occurred causing an eruption of cleaning solution from a tank. He died two weeks later. **Bargaining unit employees** at Bethlehem Steel are members of **Local Union 1688 in District 10**.

22. On June 20, **Howard Lee Atkins, 43**, an employee of **McCorkle Machine & Engineering in Huntington, West Virginia**, was fatally injured by a large piece of steel falling on him after a weld broke. Brother Atkins was a member of **Local Union 4014 in District 8**.

23. On July 6, **Martin Gilbertson**, 35, an employee of **Norton Company** in **Ravenna, Ohio**, was fatally injured when struck by kiln furnace door when furnace swiveled and broke at the bottom. Brother Gilbertson was a member of **Local Union 1761-13 in District 1**.

24. On July 10, **John Dearmond**, 45, an employee of **National Southwire Aluminum** in **Hawesville, Kentucky**, was fatally injured when he fell into an empty section of a barge. John Dearmond was not a member of **Local Union 9423 in District 8**, who were on strike at the time.

25. On July 10, **Ernest Ensor**, 53, an employee of **Willamette Industries** in **Kingsport, Tennessee**, was fatally injured, suffering crushing injuries, when a load being picked up by an overhead crane kicked out and pinned him between another roll. Brother Ensor was a member of **Local Union 12943 in District 9**.

26. On July 16, **George Krabal**, 47, an employee of **AA Environmental Service**, was fatally injured, suffering abdominal injuries when he was struck by an airline attachment blown off the end of a 16" pipeline, while working at **Bethlehem Steel, Sparrows Point** plant. **Bargaining unit employees** at Bethlehem Steel are members of **Local Unions 2609, 2610, 4727, 9084 and 9116 in District 8**.

27. On July 1, **Berry Duncan**, 61, outside contractor working at the **Reynolds Metals** plant in **Corpus Christi, TX**, was killed when the arm of a front-end loader fell pinning him to the frame. **Bargaining unit employees** are members of **Local Union 746L in District 12**.

28. On August 2, **Kim Lawson**, 37, an employee of **USS-POSCO** in **Pittsburg, California**, was killed while in the process of unchocking a work roll on the north chocking rack. The chock struck her, knocking her down and then landed on her, crushing her trachea. Sister Lawson was a member of **Local Union 1440 in District 12**.

29. On August 18, **Auther Smith**, 61, an employee of **Dixon Ticonderoga Company** in **Lakehurst, New Jersey**, was killed when a 55-gallon drum filled with lubricant fell off a pallet, which had been on a forklift onto his chest. Brother Smith was a member of **Local Union 392 in District 4**.

30. On August 23, **David A. Pulis**, a 44 year-old supervisor at **USX Corp. Minntac Mine** in **Mt. Iron, MN**, was killed when a pneumatic device exploded, throwing Pulis several feet into the air. **Bargaining unit employees** at the mine are members of **Local Union 9115 in District 11**.

31. On September 5, **Edward T. Wilson**, 49, an employee of **Columbus Foundries** in **Columbus, Georgia**, was burned over 95 percent of his body while driving forward with a ladle of iron and hit a ladle on the monorail, causing it to spill all over him. He died 19 days later. Brother Wilson was a member of **Local Union 2948 in District 9**.

32. On September 15, **Gary Yansosky**, 46, an employee of **Bethlehem Steel** in **Conshohocken, Pennsylvania**, was killed while moving a load of plates with an overhead crane. He was found pinned between the load of plates and another stack of plates sitting on the floor. This unit is non-union and is located in **District 10**.

33. On September 24, **Ronald Gerfin**, 36, an employee of **Colonial Metals Company** in **Columbia, Pennsylvania**, was fatally injured from burns he sustained from hopper back-splash resulting in serious burns over his entire body. He died about one month later. Brother Gerfin was a member of **Local Union 1035 in District 10**.

34. On October 1, **Joennell Fisher**, 51, an employee of **Litchfield Realty Corp.** in **Baltimore, Maryland**, died from contracting Legionnaires' Disease while working at the Holibird plant. Sister Fisher was a member of **Local Union 6967 in District 8**.

35. On October 10, **Joseph Morelock**, 55, an employee of **National Steel** in **Granite City, Illinois**, was fatally injured from burns he sustained while working the Keeper job on a blast furnace and the tap hole came open unexpectedly. Brother Morelock is a member of the International Chemical Workers Union Council Local 50 (ICWUC #50). **USWA bargaining unit employees** at this plant are members of **Local Unions 16, 30, 67, 68 and 9325 in District 7**.

36. On October 12, **James P. Keeley**, 29, an employee of **Dow Chemical Company** in **Midland, Michigan**, was fatally injured when his skin came in contact with and absorbed the chemical 2,4-dichlorophenol. He entered full cardiac arrest during decontamination. Brother Keeley was a member of **Local Union 12075 in District 2**.

37. On October 12, **Michael C. Sanzere**, 45, a quality control manager at **Dravo Corp.** in **Butler, Kentucky**, was crushed to death by stone and debris (500 tons of stone) collapsing the roof of the building he was working in, which was located under the No. 2 stone bin, when the cone section of the bin failed. **Bargaining unit employees** at Dravo Corp. are members of **Local Union 162 in District 8**.

38. On October 21, **Sebastian Siragusa**, 42, an employee of **Chicago Heights Steel, Inc.** in **Chicago Heights, Illinois**, was killed after slipping and was drawn into a spinning spindle in the slitter housing unit. Brother Siragusa was a member of **Local Union 9167 in District 7**.

39. On November 13, **Richie Kerr**, 43, an employee of **Cominco Ltd., Polaris Mine** in **Little Cornwallis Island, Northwest Territories, Canada**, was killed when he was struck by falling rock while working on a scaling machine. Brother Kerr was a member of **Local Union 9417 in District 3**.

40. On November 25, **Gordon Grace**, 31, an outside contractor, working at the **Inco Ltd. (South Mine)** in **Sudbury, Ontario, Canada**, was killed while attempting to remove a bulkhead covering an ore pass. He fell 610 feet down the ore pass when the bulkhead broke loose. **Bargaining unit employees** at the Inco Mines are members of **Local Union 6500 in District 6**.

41&42. On December 4, **James Russel**, 44, and **Steve Worry**, 48, employees at **Koppers Industries, Inc.** in **Clairton, Pennsylvania**, were killed when a cutting torch ignited tar that splashed out of a tar transfer line that was being removed. Brothers Russel and Worry were members of **Local Union 1557 in District 10**.

43. On December 22, **Harold Anthony**, 51, an employee of **LTV Corp.** in **East Chicago, Indiana**, was killed when he was hit by three or four railroad cars after jumping or falling during a derailment. Brother Anthony was a member of **Local Union 1011 in District 7**.