



**UNITED STEELWORKERS OF AMERICA**  
**HEALTH, SAFETY and ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**  
**2003 FATALITY REPORT**



This report is a summary of 13 fatalities reported to the USWA Health, Safety and Environment Department for January 1 through December 31, 2003.

- ◆ 7 USWA members died from traumatic injuries, along with two supervisors and one non-union employee in USWA workplaces.
- ◆ Three fatalities in non-USWA workplaces are also included, because the companies involved employ USWA members at different locations.
- ◆ The causes of death were:

6	struck by	1	heart failure
3	caught in or between	1	electrocution
2	falls		
- ◆ The type of equipment, process or working area that contributed to these accidents was:

2	fixed machinery	1	electrical equipment
2	cranes	2	walking and working surfaces
1	other mobile equipment	1	automobile
1	falls of ground in mining	1	faulty roof
1	found unconscious	1	split rim wheel assembly
- ◆ The distribution of these fatalities by industry was:

8	steel (excluding iron ore)	1	fabricated metals
3	mining	1	aluminum
- ◆ Twelve fatalities were men; one was a woman. Their ages ranged from 19 to 72; 4 were Canadian.

This report does not necessarily include all fatalities at USWA 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 USWA staff representative, or the local union.

Additional fatalities may also have occurred in non-USWA workplaces of employers who employ USWA members elsewhere.

USWA 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 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.

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 contact us at:

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[safety@uswa.org](mailto:safety@uswa.org)*

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1. On January 29, **George Wyrembelski**, 49, a foreman supervisor at **NKK Corp. (Japan); National Steel, Sub.; Great Lakes Steel Div. in Ecorse, Michigan**. Mr. Wyrembelski was killed when chunks of ice crashed through a roof and struck him. **Bargaining unit employees of National Steel are represented by Local 1299 in District 2.**
  2. On February 12, **Daniel S. Hines**, 44, a roll turner at **Allegheny Technologies, Inc.; Allegheny Ludlum Steel Div. in Brackenridge, Pennsylvania**, was killed by a drunk driver on company property while walking to work. Brother Hines was a member of **Local 1196-01 in District 10.**
  3. On February 13, **Robert Whitten**, 72, a mechanic at **Wabush Mines & Wabush Lake Railway Co. Ltd. in Wabush, Newfoundland**, was fatally injured when a traction engine coming toward his fuel vehicle for refilling slipped on the ice and slid pinning him between the two vehicles. Brother Whitten was a member of **Local Union 6285 in District 6.**
  4. On March 18, **Vernell Ayers**, 63, an operator 1/stocker at **Joseph T. Ryerson & Sons, Inc. in Chicago, Illinois**, was killed from a fatal head trauma when he was caught between two heavy steel coils while operating a crane. Brother Ayers was a member of **Local Union 9777-71 in District 7.**
  5. On April 8, **Bernard Rogers**, 48, a straightener operator for **Progressive Processing, Inc. in Elyria, Ohio**, was killed instantly when he got caught in the straightener and was thrown to the ground head first. Brother Rogers was a member of **Local Union 2354-08 in District 1.**

6. On April 9, **Joseph Galan**, 19, a utility man for **Co-Steel Company** in **Perth Amboy, New Jersey**, was killed when a dump truck hit the forklift he was in and knocked it over, causing severe head and chest injuries. Brother Galan was a member of **Local Union 9473 in District 4**.
7. On May 2, **Roland Beauregard**, 43, an employee of **Noranda Inc.; Falconbridge Societe Miniere Raglan DU; Raglan Mine** in **Katinniq-Raglan, Quebec**, was found unconscious sitting on a pipe at work. He died a few hours later from heart problems. Brother Roland was a member of **Local 9449 in District 5**.
8. On June 27, **Kriss Gibbs**, 37, an outside contractor working at **USS Granite City Works** in **Granite City, Illinois**, was killed when he was caught between two pond lining boxes. **Bargaining unit employees** of USS are represented by **Local Union 1899 in District 7**.
9. On October 30, **Dave MacLeod**, 46, a supervisor at **Dynatec Ltd.** in **Sudbury, Ontario**, fell to his death during the process of sinking a new ventilation shaft at Garson Mine, one of our mines in the Sudbury area. This is part of the Garson Mine deep project for Inco. **Bargaining unit employees** of Inco Limited are represented by **Local Union 6500 in District 6**.
10. On October 30, **Jean-Noel Belanger**, 48, an employee of **Geant Dormant (Cambior Inc.)** in **Amos, Quebec**, was killed when he could not escape a rock fall. Brother Belanger was a member of **Local Union 4796-13 in District 5**.

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### 2003 – REPORTED FATALITIES FOR NON-USWA LOCATIONS

1. On February 4, **Shiela Walker**, age 47, an outside contractor with **Johnsen Controls** at **AK Steel** in **Middletown, Ohio**, fell down some steps fracturing her ankle. She died 13 days later of blood clots in both lungs. Workers in this **District 1** plant are represented by an independent union.
2. On July 1, **Ralph Eric Jone**, age 41, a forklift operator at **AK Steel** in **Middletown, Ohio**, was killed when a 3,000 lb. crane block fell on him. Workers in this **District 1** plant are represented by an independent union.
3. On September 2, **James Walch**, 40, an employee at **Alcoa, Inc.** in **Auburn, Washington**, was killed while servicing a split-rim wheel at the company's tire wheel assembly warehouse. This is a non-union plant located in **District 11**.