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Fatal Backing Accident Results in Wrongful Death Suit in Ohio

Posted by: Curt Varone 19 hours ago 0 Comments

The driver of a fire truck that ran over a woman while backing down a walking path without a spotter is facing a wrongful death lawsuit.

Lorri Riehm, 53, was killed last June when she was run over by a Green Springs Rural Volunteer Fire Department vehicle that was clearing from the scene of a successful water rescue incident at the Beaver Creek Reservoir in Seneca County, Ohio.

An investigation determined that firefighter Seth Knieriemen was backing the fire truck slowly down a path atop an embankment used by many as a walking trail. He did not have spotters and his vision was partially obstructed by a hose reel. Riehm was reportedly walking on the embankment trail wearing headphones with her back to the approaching vehicle when she was struck.

Today her husband, Paul Riehm, filed suit against Knieriemen and the Green Springs Rural Volunteer Fire Department, alleging negligence and wrongful death. The suit was filed in Seneca County Common Pleas Court.

The News-Messenger quoted Riehm's attorney, Chuck Boyk, as saying:

"This completely senseless accident not only took the life of a woman dedicated to her community through children's ministries, it also shattered her family. Despite seeking out what was supposed to be a safe place to walk, her life was taken in a completely preventable incident that to this day the Green Springs fire department has yet to apologize for or even extend their condolences about."

More on the story.

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ABOUT CURT VARONE



Curt Varone has over 40 years of fire service experience and 30 as a practicing attorney licensed in both Rhode Island and Maine. His background includes 29 years as a career firefighter in Providence (retiring as a Deputy Assistant Chief), as well as volunteer and paid on call experience. He is the author of two books: Legal Considerations for Fire and Emergency Services, (2006, 2nd ed. 2011, 3rd ed. 2014) and Fire Officer's Legal Handbook (2007), and is a contributing editor for Firehouse Magazine writing the Fire Law column.

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