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## Green Springs firefighter, department sued for death

12/15/2016

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TIFFIN — The husband of a woman hit and killed by a Green Springs Rural Volunteer Fire Department truck has filed a wrongful-death lawsuit against the department and the firefighter behind the wheel.

Paul Riehm filed suit Tuesday in Seneca County Court of Common Pleas against the department and Seth Knieriemen, who on June 28 struck Lorri Riehm while driving in reverse at the Beaver Creek Reservoir in Adams Township, according to the suit.

The lawsuit accuses Mr. Knieriemen and the department of negligence because he drove in reverse without looking behind him, the truck he was in had an obstructed rear view, and he was operating a vehicle in an area meant for pedestrians and prohibited to motor vehicles.

“I want to see policies and procedures put into place,” Mr. Riehm said in a statement. “This should have never happened, and I do not want to see it happen to anyone else.”

A phone message left with the fire department Wednesday was not returned.

According to the civil complaint, Mrs. Riehm was walking along the embankment trail around the reservoir June 28 when the fire department responded to a report of a capsized boat.

A crew arrived with a rescue boat but ran out of fuel and couldn't return to the boat ramp. Mr. Knieriemen drove the department's pickup to the scene, but the team realized they had the wrong type of fuel and had to return to the launch.

He picked up two boaters saved from the capsized boat and drove them to an EMS crew at the boat launch. He returned with more fuel to the other side of the reservoir.

Department members said they could not get the boat out of the water and asked Mr. Knieriemen to bring the truck over to help pull out the boat, according to the lawsuit.

Other department members said they saw Mrs. Riehm walking on the embankment with her headphones on and her phone out. Mr. Riehm argues in his lawsuit that his wife would walk along the reservoir because it was safe and away from vehicular traffic.

Mr. Knieriemen backed the truck up, and a co-worker yelled to him to stop because of Mrs. Riehm. By the time he stopped, he had run her over, according to the court documents. She died at the scene.

The department had placed a skid/hose reel in the truck bed, which obstructed the rear view, according to the suit. No one acted as a spotter or guide, Mr. Riehm argues.

A pair of phone calls and a letter to the department prompted no response, according to a news release by Charles E. Boyk Law Offices, which is representing Mr. Riehm.

The suit asks for a monetary award of more than \$25,000 and for the department to implement safe movement and back-up procedures.

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