



## City Laborer Struck and Killed by a Motor Vehicle while Closing a Water Gate Valve

### What happened?

In 2009, a 35-year-old male city water department laborer was fatally injured while responding to a water main break. The victim and a co-worker needed to close up a water main gate valve located in a roadway up the street from the water main break. They parked their work pickup truck just beyond the valve, facing the same direction as the flow of traffic. While the victim was using a gate valve wrench to close the valve, the co-worker was releasing water at a nearby fire hydrant. The co-worker heard a crash and turned to see that the victim had been struck by a minivan and pushed into the rear of their pickup truck.

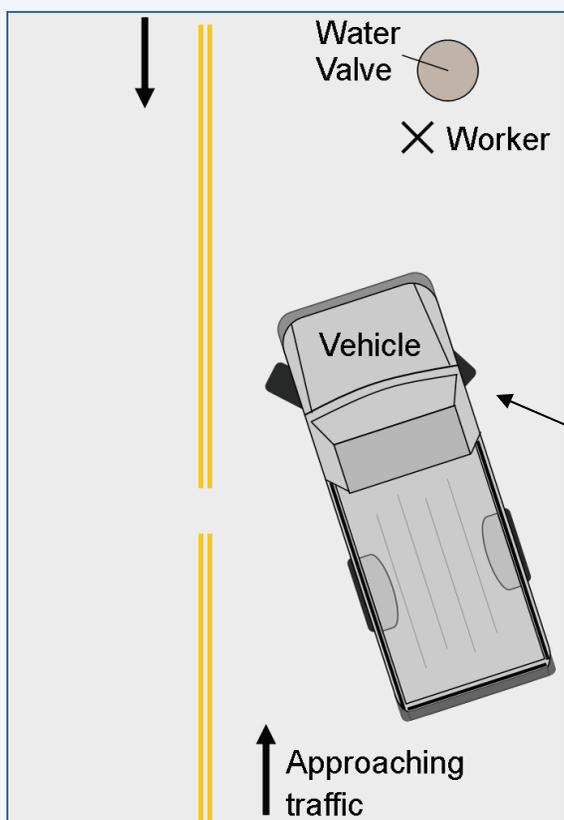


Tom Maguire/The Sun Chronicle

### What can be done?

## Workers: Use your vehicle as a barrier

when performing short-duration roadway work in low-speed roads



1. Once on site, determine the best location for work vehicles and equipment, and the appropriate number and location of traffic control devices.
2. Position the vehicle between workers and approaching traffic, to act as a barrier to protect workers.
3. Turn the vehicle's wheels so that if it is struck from behind it will not hit the worker.
4. Place the vehicle in park and set the brake.
5. Always face and watch for approaching traffic, and minimize time in the roadway.

More recommendations and resources on back





## What Employers Should Do

- Develop a **temporary traffic control plan (TCP)** for each project that includes proper positioning of traffic control devices and vehicles, to minimize employees' exposure to moving traffic. Develop a general TCP, which can be modified as needed, for short-duration tasks like accessing water valves located in roadways.
- Provide **work zone safety training** for all employees who will be required to complete tasks in or close to roadways.
- Ensure that work zones are set up in accordance with the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*, Part 6, when performing work in roadways. This includes using appropriate traffic control devices and safety apparel such as those listed below:



Use warning signs, like the “Men Working” symbol, to alert approaching traffic of workers in the roadway.



Provide high-intensity rotating or flashing warning lights to place on top of work vehicles.



Supply workers with high-visibility ANSI Class II vests, boots and hard hats.

*More suggestions on temporary traffic control zone activities are in the MUTCD (see safety resources below).*

### Roadway Work Zone Safety Resources

#### U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration

*Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*, 2009 Edition  
Part 6: Temporary Traffic Control.

Go to: [http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/kno\\_2009.htm](http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/kno_2009.htm)

#### National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

*Building Safer Highway Work Zones: Measures to Prevent Worker Injuries From Vehicles and Equipment*,  
Publication No. 2001-128.

Go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2001-128/>

#### National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse

*Roadway Safety + (Plus)*

This training program gives an overview of common hazards in the highway and prevention measures. Available in English, Spanish and Portuguese.

Go to: [http://www.workzonesafety.org/training/courses\\_programs/rsa\\_program](http://www.workzonesafety.org/training/courses_programs/rsa_program)

### Massachusetts Resources

#### MA Department of Industrial Accidents (DIA)

The DIA has grants available for providing workplace health and safety training to employers and employees. Any company covered by the Massachusetts Workers' Compensation Insurance Law is eligible to apply.

Go to: [www.mass.gov/dia/safety](http://www.mass.gov/dia/safety)

#### MA Division of Occupational Safety (DOS)

The DOS offers free services to help employers improve their safety and health programs and train employees.

Public employers, Go to: [www.mass.gov/dos/mwshp](http://www.mass.gov/dos/mwshp)

Private employers, Go to: [www.mass.gov/dos/consult](http://www.mass.gov/dos/consult)

#### MA Department of Public Health

The Massachusetts Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) project investigates work-related fatalities and develops prevention recommendations. Full reports and other FACE Facts are available online.

Go to: [www.mass.gov/dph/face](http://www.mass.gov/dph/face) and click on “Educational Materials”

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH), in cooperation with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, conducts the project known as FACE (Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation). FACE seeks to prevent occupational fatalities by identifying and investigating these incidents and then developing and disseminating prevention strategies to those who can intervene in the workplace. Massachusetts FACE is supported by cooperative agreement # 2U00H008490-06 from CDC-NIOSH.

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