

Second victim dies of burns from power plant explosion

Milwaukee Sentinel, Mar 9, 1995 by BETSY THATCHER

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A second victim of the Feb. 12 steam explosion at Wisconsin Electric Power Co.'s Pleasant Prairie plant died Tuesday.

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WEPCO employee Gregory A. Schultz, of Waterford, died at St. Mary's Hospital in Milwaukee, where the 37-year-old operating supervisor was being treated for severe burns after a steam pipe ruptured at the Kenosha County power plant.

Schultz and another operating supervisor, Steven Baker, were performing a routine inspection of the plant when a 12-inch pipe that carries hot, pressurized water into the boiler of Unit 1 ruptured. Baker, 38, of Kenosha, died at the plant.

Schultz, who had worked for the company since 1978, received second- and third-degree burns over 60% of his body.

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"Words can't express the sorrow and regret we feel," WEPCO President Richard Grigg said in a statement. "We are remembering the Schultz and Baker families in our thoughts and prayers."

An investigation into the cause of the rupture is expected to be completed by the end of the week, company spokesmen said.

Preliminary results indicate there was substantial thinning of the pipe wall, which resulted in a break, a company statement said.

Employees of the Pleasant Prairie plant plan to buy a granite marker to place near a flagpole outside the plant in memory of the men.

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