



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

NEWS from Fire Fighters

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Contact: Tom Woodley
202 833-8855

Court Action Filed by Family of Kilgore Fire Fighter Killed in the Line of Duty

Gregg County, TX – The mother of Cory Galloway, Regina Galloway, on behalf of her family, has filed a lawsuit in the District Court for Gregg County, Texas, against E-One, Inc., Hall-Mark Apparatus of Texas, and the City of Kilgore in connection with the tragic death of their son.

Cory Galloway, 23, was a career fire fighter employed by the City of Kilgore Fire Department when he was killed while on-duty during a training exercise at Kilgore College on January 25, 2009. The Fire Department had accepted delivery of an aerial platform truck just weeks before the exercise, and required its fire fighters to operate the equipment in a high risk exercise after just a few hours of basic training.

Galloway was in the truck's aerial platform, which was extended to the roof of the tallest building in the City of Kilgore, an eight-story dormitory at Kilgore College, when the aerial platform became stuck on a concrete parapet wall on the roof of the building. As Galloway's fellow fire fighters attempted to free the aerial platform, the top edge of the wall gave way and the platform sprang back from the top of the building and repeatedly whipped violently back and forth. During the incident, the platform gates sprung outward past their stopping points, through which Galloway fell approximately 80 feet to the ground below.

The aerial platform truck, manufactured by E-One, Inc., and sold to the City of Kilgore Fire Department by Hall-Mark Fire Apparatus of Texas, failed to include safety belts or otherwise comply with the standards set by the National Fire Protection Association. The aerial platform was not designed to minimize the risk that the lifting eyes would become snagged on buildings. The platform gates were not designed with adequate restraining strips or latches requiring turning or twisting motions to open, which would have prevented the gates from springing outward past their stopping point.

The Kilgore fire fighters had not received adequate training from either E-One, Inc., or the City of Kilgore Fire Department, before they were required to operate the aerial platform unsupervised in a high risk training scenario. The aerial truck was the first platform apparatus purchased by the Fire Department and the fire fighters had never operated the platform near a building. The Fire Department also lacked Standard Operating Procedures regarding training, operations and supervision before the tragedy.

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Cory Galloway was a member of Local 2996 of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF).

“Nothing prepares us to cope with the grief that we feel when we lose a brother or sister in the line of duty,” IAFF General President Harold A. Schaitberger. “This tragic incident was preventable, and this court action under the IAFF’s Front Line Policy is an important part of the efforts to ensure that it does not happen again to Cory’s fellow fire fighters.”

Regrettably, the Kilgore Fire Department has not instituted improved policies and procedures to prevent similar tragedies in the future. On the contrary, Chiefs in the Kilgore Fire Department have directed the fire fighters to stop asking for needed improvements and “get over” the incident that killed Cory Galloway and another fire fighter. It is this uncaring and irresponsible reaction on the part of Kilgore officials that, in part, has caused Cory’s family to institute this court action.

The International Association of Fire Fighters, headquartered in Washington, DC, is the leading advocate in North America for the safety and training of fire fighters and paramedics. The IAFF represents more than 297,000 full-time professional fire fighters and paramedics who protect communities in every state in the United States and throughout Canada. More information is available at www.iaff.org

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