

10-18-1985 Mike Gurdy – Georgia - – FF PSD Fatality – DAM – Training**Mike Gurdy**

September 18, 1985 – LODD

Firefighter Mike Gurley, 35

Fulton County Fire Department. Sandy Springs, GA
During a drill at a dam, in which firefighters were familiarizing themselves with diving equipment, it was decided to replace a steel plate over a large pipe located at the bottom of the dam.

While hammering the plate into place, Gurley radioed the surface of his legs were caught by the suction in the pipe and he was pinned. Other divers attempted to free him with no success.

After about an hour, he lost consciousness and a crane had to be used to pull him out of the pipe, about 30 feet below the surface. He was in respiratory arrest and was rushed to the hospital, where all efforts to revive him failed. His death was attributed to stress, extreme pain, and hyperventilation, which caused him to lose consciousness.



Firefighter Gurley was a 10 veteran of the department.

The one category C-H fatality in 1985 involved a **fire department diver/** instructor who had been conducting a diver training program for the county in Georgia just before the accident. This victim was considered to be on duty at the time. It was reported that a civilian company working on the dam at the same time had lost tools. While searching for same, the victim found a "plate" missing from the dam face which he volunteered to replace. While doing so, his legs were sucked into the plate opening and he expired. The autopsy report indicates the cause the death as hyperventilation syndrome. The victim was in constant communication since he was operating on surface-supplied air until approximately ten minutes before his body was retrieved from the dam face.

SEPTEMBER, 1985**GEORGIA**

A 35 yoa firefighter drowned during familiarization dive on surface supplied air. The diver had met a local commercial dive operator at a working dive site to familiarize himself with surface supplied air and determine its application for his fire department team. During the dive the diver's legs became trapped in an intake pipe on the face of the dam. After being trapped for 45 minutes in 25 feet of water, the decision was made to pull the diver from the pipe with the use of a crane via his umbilical. He drowned during the attempt and the autopsy reported the diver died of "Hyperventilation Syndrome."