Injured Carpenter Dies Driving To Hospital



The recent death of 27-year-old Octavio Godinez is a lesson to everyone on the job – don’t drive while impaired by injury.

The carpenter from Fort Wayne, IN, was working at a home in Coosaw Creek, SC, when he suffered a puncture wound to his wrist. A co-worker (his father-in-law) had left the jobsite to get supplies, so Godinez was alone and bleeding heavily. In a state of panic, he made the decision to drive himself to a nearby hospital, where his father-in-law agreed to meet him. But Godinez lost control of his pickup truck and struck a tree. A lack of skid marks led police to believe that the driver may have been unconscious prior to the collision.

An autopsy revealed that Godinez died from a ruptured heart (as a result of the crash) and loss of blood from his wrist wound. He leaves behind a wife and a son.

Supervisors should make it clear to all lone workers that they should not operate a motor vehicle while injured. In addition, supervisors should ensure that employees not work alone if at all possible. Employees who have to work alone should be equipped with radio communication or a frequent call-in system that lets supervisors know they are safe.