School Maintenance Supervisor Gunned Down



Workplace violence reared its ugly head in Caroline, VA, recently when a school maintenance supervisor was gunned down in his office.

Police report that 66-year-old Thomas E. Monroe, a former maintenance employee, was charged with the murder of 51-year-old David S. Ganoe Jr. The victim was Monroe's boss, and the shooting occurred the day after Monroe was fired.

Monroe is accused of entering Ganoe's office on Nov. 17 and shooting him several times following an argument. According to police, Monroe later turned himself in. Both the accused and victim worked for the Caroline County public school system.

School officials did not disclose the reason Monroe was fired, and no information was given about what "personal issues" Monroe had with Ganoe.

The first step in avoiding workplace violence from a terminated employee is to defuse it. Let your co-workers know what's okay and what crosses the line. Take steps to discipline anyone who crosses that line – never ignore aggression or threats. Follow security guidelines closely and don't allow a terminated employee back in the building.

Try to find out a little bit about the worker. Has he or she made threats against anyone? Is there a history of violent, aggressive, or confrontational behavior? If necessary, speak to co-workers or managers who work closely with the person.

All managers who work with the person should attend the termination meeting, to avoid making one or two persons a target for rage. Explain to the person why the decision was taken. Be appropriately sympathetic, and don't fake it.

Source: The Free Lance-Star, Fredricksburg, Virginia, November, 18 2006