

ROLLOVER KILLS VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER

JUNE 29 -- SILVER CITY, NM: A Cotton City, New Mexico, fire chief was killed Thursday evening when a tanker truck he was driving overturned and fell down a canyon. The Animas Volunteer Fire Department tanker was en route to the 3,500-acre Jenny Fire southwest of Beaverhead.

The Silver City Daily Press

<http://www.thedailypress.com/NewsFolder/6.27.1.html>

reported that Ralph Dawdy, 47, was driving north on Wall Lake Road about 7:45 p.m. Lt. Eddie Flores of the New Mexico State Police said the tanker failed to negotiate a turn, left the road, and rolled several times before landing at the bottom of Terry Canyon. Dawdy was ejected from the vehicle.

Investigators said Dawdy was not driving recklessly or too fast; he was pronounced dead at the scene.

A report by firehouse.com

<http://cms.firehouse.com/content/article/article.jsp?sectionId=46&id=13886>

said Dawdy worked full time as Chief of the Cotton City Fire Department in Hildago County, and also served eight years as a volunteer firefighter with Animas Volunteer Fire and Rescue. Animas dispatcher Jared Fralgie said another firefighter was following Dawdy when the accident occurred; he came around the same curve in the road just in time to see Dawdy's tanker going over the edge. "We're slowly getting through it," said Fralgie. "It's been a shock to us all; it really shook the community up."

Dawdy is survived by his wife and two children; a memorial service is scheduled for Tuesday, July 1 at 10 a.m. at the Animas High School, and at the 4th of July parade in Rodeo, 20 miles west of Animas, fire departments will gather to honor Dawdy.

Animas Volunteer Fire and Rescue, the Cotton City Fire Department, and three other fire departments serve a rural ranching and farming community of 500 square miles. This is the department's first line of duty death.