



G33 An Exceptional Case of Death Due to Lesions of Water Nozzle

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The goal of this presentation is to describe an exceptional case of mortal lesions due to water nozzle, a professional tool used to wash solid surfaces.

This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by describing unusual high pressure water injuries.

A 28-year-old young worker at a navy yard, died while he was trying to clean the hold ports of a ship moored at wharf of Arsenale S. Marco in Trieste (Italy).

During the investigation, the remains of the man was found laying face down on the floor of a little mobile platform raised several meters from the ground, where he was working alone.

Close to the body there was the water nozzle with the switch in the off position. There was a wide tear in the overall she was wearing and "homogenized" organic tissues were found on the platform. Skeletal elements of the remains were exposed where soft tissue had been avulsed. The postmortem examination showed skin abrasions on the right half of the face with a fracture of the skull, wide and deep soft tissue injuries of the right upper limb with areas of complete soft tissue avulsion. The soft tissue of the right side of the chest was largely absent and perforated with laceration of the lung and heart. Technical testing of the tool by an engineer showed the equipment for water cleaning was working properly, providing of water with a pressure of about 500 bars by an auto-turning nozzle. However, the safety devices had been altered. Unaltered, the jet of water should be stopped automatically if the water release and safety buttons (the last one has to be activated by the other hand) are not activated at the same time.

The scene investigation, with particular reference to the remains position, and the water nozzle found close to the body, the nature of the injuries, the negative toxicology testing, along with the technical findings about the functioning of the tool and its altered safety devices provided a clear sequence of events that led to this death. This accidental death was caused by the inappropriate use of a water cleaning device.

Water Nozzle, Crime Scene Investigation, High Pressure Water Injuries