



Chelan County Sheriff's Office

Brian Burnett, Sheriff

Law and Justice Bldg ★ 401 Washington Street #1 ★ Wenatchee, WA 98801
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For Immediate Release

Contact: Chief Jason Reinfeld

Incident #: 18C08636

Phone: 509-667-6337

Date: August 7th, 2018

<http://www.co.chelan.wa.us/sheriff>

Update August 7th, 2018 1711 Hours

The Chelan County Coroner, Wayne Harris, conducted an autopsy on the victim from the August 4th, 2018 climbing accident that took place on Buck Mountain. The victim, Mr. James Rothwell, died as a result of blunt force trauma to his head and trunk. Manner of death has been ruled an accident. Mr. Rothwell was wearing a helmet but the force to his head from the fall was too much for the helmet to absorb the energy and he had severe trauma to his brain.

Please keep Mr. Rothwell's friends and family in your thoughts and prayers as they grieve this sudden loss.

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Update August 6th, 2018 1321 hours

The victim has been identified as 43-year-old James Rothwell of Seattle, WA.

Chelan County Coroner, Wayne Harris, indicates that an autopsy is scheduled for Tuesday, August 7th, to determine the exact cause of death.

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Update August 5th, 2018 2020 hours

The two remaining hikers have made their way out of the mountains. After speaking with them it was determined, they were traversing a steep face when the victim lost his footing. He fell approximately 50 feet. They hiked down to him and rendered aid. He survived for a short period of time before he succumbed to his injuries. The victim has now been identified as a 44-year-old male from the Seattle area. Initially it was believed he was from New York but he has lived in the Seattle area for several years. His identity is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.



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Initial Media Release 08/05/18

Sheriff Brian Burnett reports on August 4th, 2018 at 2:34 PM CCSO was advised of an emergency beacon activation in the area of Buck Mountain, a remote area approximately 17 miles north of Lake Wenatchee. After obtaining the coordinates from AFRCC (Armed Forces Rescue Coordination Center) it was determined, the beacon was staying in one location. The Chelan County Sheriff's Office AIR10 helicopter was deployed and located a group of three near the coordinates at approximately 6:45 PM. They were at about 6750 feet in elevation. One of the three subjects was laying down and wrapped in an emergency blanket. There was no suitable landing zone nearby so a request was made through state emergency management for a hoist capable helicopter.

King County Sheriff's Office accepted the mission. They arrived on scene at approximately 10:00 PM but had to abort the mission due to weather. A call was placed back into state emergency management requesting a helicopter from NAS Whidbey Island. The Navy crew accepted the mission and arrived in the area at approximately 12:40 AM on August 5th. They were able to hoist the patient, a 44-year-old male out of New York on board the helicopter. He was deceased due to unknown injuries. Due to low fuel in the helicopter, he was transported to Boeing Field in Seattle.

The remaining two hikers were uninjured and remained on scene to hike out in day light. At this time it is unknown how the injuries were caused.