Falls Fatality File

Workers scrambled to pull man from vat of sulfuric acid

South Lyon — A 54-year-old worker died after he fell into a vat of sulfuric acid at a South Lyon-based steel manufacturing firm in what is being described as a “serious industrial accident.”

Daniel Hill was fully submerged in the 10 percent to 12 percent sulfuric acid solution Saturday afternoon as his Michigan Seamless Tube co-workers worked desperately to pull him from the industrial container, burning themselves from the at least 160-degree chemical solution, Fire Chief Robert Vogel said.

Other employees, co-workers saw him in the tank,” Vogel said. “He was completely submerged and was 100 percent covered in burns. The gentleman was trying to get out. They ran and grabbed him and pulled him out.”

Roughly 11 hours later, Hill died of chemical burns at 11:30 p.m. Saturday, said Kristin LaMaire, administrative assistant to the Washtenaw County Medical Examiner.

South Lyon police responded to an emergency call at about 12:21 p.m. that day to the manufacturing facility at 400 McMunn St., Police Chief Chris Sovik said. The employees had put Hill under a safety shower, and medics then transported him to the University Hospital in Ann Arbor.

“He was speaking when we were there,” Vogel said. “He was walking and talking. Unfortunately, he passed. It was pretty extreme burns.”

South Lyon police responded to Michigan Seamless Tube, on the 400 block of McMunn, early Saturday afternoon, after a man fell into a tub of sulfuric acid.

It was unclear how Hill ended up in the vat and how long it was before he was rescued, he said.

The co-workers who assisted Hill sustained burns to their hands, Vogel said. Medics treated them at the scene.

Neighbors to Hill and his wife, Pamela, called the incident a tragedy. Stephen Kobylarz said the couple had moved from Whitmore Lake to a new house they built in South Lyon in July.