# Irrigation Pipe Work Safety Fatality File

A family is mourning the loss of a man who drowned after being sucked into a drain pipe in the California Delta in Stockton.

Now, they are warning others to be careful of the hidden dangers in the Delta.

Carlos Tovar's family says what started as a fun day boating on the water, suddenly took a tragic turn.

Carlos was untangling a ski line when he was sucked under and drowned, the family said.

"Now wonderful man is dead, he apparently got caught in an irrigation pipe running water out of the Delta," the family's lawyer said. "They couldn't free Carlos and he drowned right before their eyes despite their efforts."

It was a pipe used to pump water to crops. Sgt. Epperson with Joaquin County Sheriff's Dept. says similar tubes are scattered throughout the Delta, but he's never seen an incident like this.

"It's the first one that I've personally heard of," Epperson said.

Thousands are expected to be on the waterway through the rest of this 4th of July week. Epperson warns that if you see any of these tubes, it is best to stay away.

"You can see it's an oddball man-made shape going up at an angle on the banks, so you know that's a pipe and it doesn't matter if the pipe is pushing water out or pulling it in. It's a danger to you either way, so you just need to stay away from it," he said.

It is unclear who the pipe in this case belongs to, but locals say they are often owned by individual farmers.

The Tovars want to know why there isn't protection around the pipes.

“The safeguards are for the system, not necessarily to stop people from going in, the only thing they have on the front of them is a grate or a crossbar,” Epperson said.