Retail Worker Safety Fatality File

It took 4 days to discover a worker’s body in a department store bathroom.

COLUMBIA, S.C. — A 63-year-old worker died in the public bathroom of a South Carolina department store, but her body was not discovered for four days, authorities said.

Bessie Durham, a janitor at the Belk at Columbian Centre, was found dead Monday in a bathroom stall, Columbia police said. Her cleaning cart was outside the restroom.

Durham was last seen Thursday at work and her body was found shortly after her family filed a missing person report, Columbia Deputy Police Chief Melron Kelly, told WIS-TV.

The Lexington County Coroner’s Office said there are no signs someone killed Durham or that she was using drugs. An autopsy is planned to determine her cause of death.

The store was open regularly over those four days and Kelly said police are investigating to see if anyone was negligent.

“We’re still working with the store to find out what their process is to be closing down the store, inspecting the store and things of that nature,” Kelly said.

Belk didn’t return an email seeking comment.