

Deputy is struck, killed by trailer crossing median

BY BILL BRYAN
Of the Post-Dispatch

A deputy sheriff for St. Francois County died early Sunday from injuries Saturday when a trailer came loose from an oncoming vehicle, went across the median and struck his patrol car, authorities said.

Deputy Sheriff Steven Ziegler, 32, died at 8:15 a.m. Sunday at St. John's Mercy Medical Center in Creve Coeur.

Leadington, Mo., Police Sgt. Rick Pogue, who handled the wreck, said the accident happened before 8 a.m. Saturday on Highway 67 near Highway 32 in Leadington, about 65 miles south of St. Louis.

Ziegler had been a deputy sheriff for nine years. He was married, and he and his wife, Racheal, had four children, said St. Francois County Sheriff Dan Bullock.

"He was a good, all-around officer, and he was a good friend," Bullock said.

Funeral arrangements were pending Sunday.

Pogue said Ziegler was driving south on Highway 67 when a 16-foot utility trailer broke away from a northbound Ford Explorer that was towing it. The trailer was hauling a heavy "straw blower," a machine similar to a wood chipper.

The trailer went across a lane of traffic and the grass median and then slammed into Ziegler's oncoming car.

The driver of the Explorer, Douglas Rector, 29, of Desloge, Mo., was not ticketed.

"The trailer was properly hitched," said Pogue, who added that he did not know what caused the trailer to break off.

Dangerous Trailers.Org Officer Ziegler Killed By Loose Trailer But How Did It Come Off? What Failed? Nobody Wants To Talk About It Or Expose The Truth

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