Bill

INJURED AT WORK, OVERDOSED AT HOME

Rex is well-versed in the demands of safety and environmental compliance. As a safety professional at a utility company, he has dealt with a variety of safety issues. However, his professional training and experience did not prepare him for the unexpected tragedy that occurred outside his workplace.

Rex's 33-year-old brother, Bill, died of an accidental overdose of methadone on July 12, 2006. A machinist dealing with severe lower back pain for most of his life, Bill had been preparing for surgery to relive the unremitting pain.

"He had been taking hydrocodone for pain relief but developed a tolerance to it," explains Rex. "His doctor then prescribed methadone. What Bill didn't understand is that methadone accumulates slowly and remains in the body for a longer period of time than hydrocodone."

Bill took too large of a methadone dose from which he never woke up, leaving beyond a wife, two sons, a large extended family and many friends. Tragically, he joined a burgeoning number of Americans who are succumbing to unintentional drug overdoses.

"My brother was injured at work, but he overdosed at home. So obviously, this isn't a concern isolated to the workplace," Bill says. It is an issue that could impact anyone, regardless of income, age, or circumstance."

Rex believes in the importance of a safe workplace and home environment. "I never want to see another person fall victim to addiction, overdose or lack of knowledge when it comes to prescription medication," emphasizes Rex, who has a family.

His personal tragedy has energized him to do what he can to awaken people to the hazards of misusing prescription drugs.

"Organizations need to get information out to their employees and help employees understand the gravity of prescription drug use," Rex says. "It's a life or death situation."

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