

07-11-2016 Iron Co WI – Mitchell Koski- FF Driving – Flash Flood

Mitch Koski - assistant chief drowned while assisting people during a flash flood.

Condolences: WI Asst. Chief Drowns During Flash Flood

A WI assistant chief drowned while assisting people during a flash flood.

Montreal Assistant Chief Mitch Koski, 56, responded in his personal vehicle to assist Saxon-Gurney Fire Dept.



There was a mutual aid agreement between the departments.
~ Firehouse LODD

More info:

<http://www.leadertelegram.com/News/Daily-Updates/2016/07/14/State-dealing-with-storm-damage.html>

WI county commissioner killed in flooding

<http://www.kare11.com/news/wi-county-commissioner-killed-in-flooding/270844671>

July 12, 2016 **KARE 11 Staff, KARE**

SAXON, Wis. - Flash flooding has killed a well-known Wisconsin man. According to the Iron County Sheriff's Office, 56-year-old Mitchell Koski, of Montreal, died as a result of flash flooding near Saxon Harbor around 9:30 p.m. Monday.

Koski served as an Iron County commissioner. Details surrounding his death have not yet been released as it remains under investigation.

Several roads in the area were blocked off by local authorities due to flooding. U.S. Highway 2 has been closed and re-routed. State Highways 169 and 122 along with County Highways A and B remain closed for repairs.

Koski appears to be the first death reported due to recent flash flooding in central Minnesota and western Wisconsin, where many flood warnings remain in effect.

Wisconsin State of Emergency

On Tuesday evening, Governor Scott Walker declared a State of Emergency in eight Wisconsin counties including Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Price, Sawyer, and Washburn.

"I express my thanks and appreciation to all of the first responders and officials in the area who are working hard to manage the situation. I am instructing the Wisconsin National Guard and all state agencies to aide those affected by the storms," Walker said.

Flooding causes major damage at Saxon Harbor; one fatality reported

<http://www.duluthnewtribune.com/news/4072522-flooding-causes-major-damage-saxon-harbor-one-fatality-reported>

By John Lundy on Jul 12, 2016 at 5:50 p.m.

Flash flooding in the Saxon Harbor area of Iron County on Monday night caused major damage and left one person dead.



Iron County Sheriff Tony Furyk said Mitchell R. Koski, 56, of Montreal was pronounced dead by the county coroner.

Furyk attributed the fatality to the storm but offered no further details, saying the incident was under investigation. on County Board.

"Mitch was a wonderful asset to both the community of Montreal and Iron County," said Leola Maslanka, a Montreal alderman who had served on the City Board with Koski.

He had left government service recently to spend more time with other things, she said.

Hurley firefighters and others were involved in rescuing people who were stranded in the Saxon Harbor area along the shore of Lake Superior northwest of Hurley, Furyk said in a news release.

Calls about flooding in the northern part of the county started coming in to dispatchers around 9:30 p.m. on Monday, Furyk said. Numerous roads were closed, including a section of U.S. Highway 2.

As of Tuesday afternoon, state Highways 169 and 122 and county Highways B and A still were closed, Furyk said.

Little was left of the Saxon Harbor Marina & Campground.

“Basically, the campground and southern half of the marina is gone, washed away,” said Eric Peterson, administrator of Iron County Forest and Parks Department, which owns the property. “The northern half of the marina, over 50 percent of that is destroyed” and the rest damaged.

He estimated damage would be in the millions if not in the tens of millions.

“We’re going to look to state and federal disaster relief, I’m sure, for something as devastating as this,” Peterson said.

State officials reported a preliminary tally of 85 boats damaged or destroyed at Saxon Harbor. A number of downed trees were floating in the harbor and the adjacent waters of Lake Superior were muddy from flood runoff.

Close to 20 boats washed up along the Lake Superior beach and at least six hadn’t been accounted for, Peterson said. A few boats appeared to be undamaged. At least five camping vehicles were swept into the lake.

The U.S. Coast Guard responded to the area and reported finding debris — trees, docks and a couple dozen small watercraft such as kayaks — about 3 to 6 miles offshore. There were no reports of people missing in the lake, the Coast Guard reported.

From 7 to 10 inches of rain fell in the Saxon area from late Monday into early Tuesday, Peterson said. Hurley, to the east, had less than 4 inches, he said. The storm damage comes during the middle of the summer tourism season that contributes to Iron County’s economy.

“Our area is extremely devastated — the boats, the buildings, the trailers, the campers, our infrastructure,” Maslanka said. “It’s sad to see. We’re struggling communities financially as it is.”

Peterson credited the campground caretaker hired by the private Saxon Harbor Boating Club for alerting campers to get to higher ground as Oronto Creek, which flows into Lake Superior at Saxon Harbor, turned into a raging torrent.

“There were not a very large number of people there,” Peterson said. “Fortunately, it did not happen on a weekend because typically the campground would be full.” The marina had 90 boat slips and the campground around 30 sites, Peterson said.

Both will be closed at least for the remainder of the year. Iron County’s ATV and UTV trails were closed until trails could be assessed and damage repaired.

Although he was able to get to Saxon Harbor on Tuesday morning with the help of the county Highway Department, roads to the harbor are closed to the public, Peterson said.

“The access is for necessary, essential personnel,” he said. “The roads are not open to the public to get down there to look. There’s a lot of work that needs to be done there.”

One man killed in Iron County floods

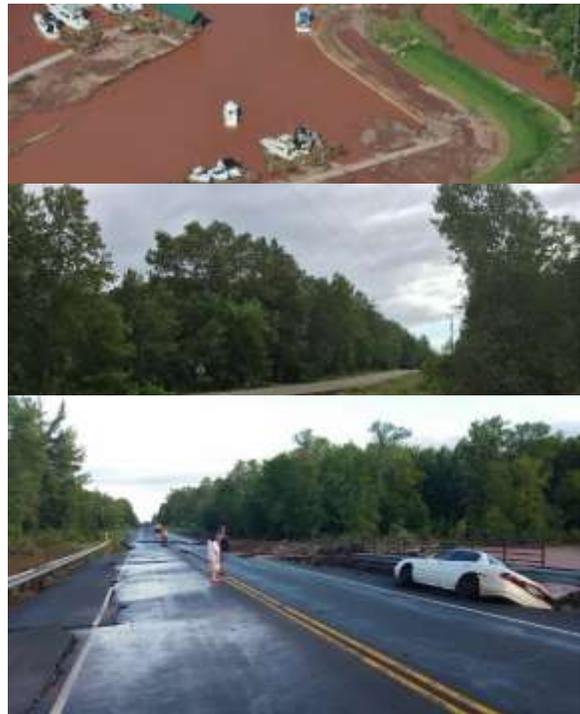
<http://www.wkow.com/story/32429179/2016/07/12/one-man-killed-in-iron-county-floods>

Jul 12, 2016

Saxon, WI (WKOW) --- According to the Iron County Sheriff's Office, 56-year-old Mitchell Koski was killed in the Monday night flooding.

Our affiliate NNCNOW.com reports Koski is an Iron County board member. Officials tell them Koski was pronounced dead at the scene around 9:30 p.m. Monday night. The death is currently under investigation.

A number of local agencies were also helping rescue people stranded in the harbor area. Wisconsin Emergency Management says 85 boats were damaged or destroyed.



Mitch Koski

Assistant Chief Koski of the Montreal Fire Department was responding under a mutual aid agreement with the Saxon-Gurney Fire Department to people in distress in Saxon Harbor after making radio contact with the Saxon-Gurney Fire Chief. The private vehicle that Assistant Chief Koski responded in was washed into the harbor by the flash flood waters and Assistant Chief Koski perished from drowning.

Incident Location: Co Hwy A, Saxon, WI 54559 (U.S. National Grid: 15T XM 9677 5846)

Department Information Montreal Fire Department

53 Wisconsin AVE, Montreal, WI
U.S. National Grid: 15T YM 1271 4564
Montreal, Wisconsin 54550-9704

Fatality status is provisional and may change as USFA contacts State Fire Marshals to verify fatality incident information.

Age:	56
Rank:	Assistant Fire Chief
Classification:	Volunteer
Incident Date:	Jul 11, 2016 22:45
Date of Death:	Jul 11, 2016
Cause of Death:	Caught or Trapped
Nature of Death:	Drowning
Activity Type:	Driving/Riding Personal Vehicle
Emergency Duty:	Yes
Duty Type:	Responding
Fixed Property Use:	Street/Road

FF

(January 13, 1958 - July 11, 2016)

Mitchell Ray "Mitch" Koski, 58, of Montreal, died unexpectedly Monday evening, July 11, 2016, in a flash flood/drowning accident at Saxon Harbor.



Mitch was born Jan. 13, 1958, in Ironwood, Mich., son of the late Raymond and Marion (Lantta) Koski, attended grade school in Upson, and graduated from J.E. Murphy High School in Hurley in 1976. He then attended Gogebic Community College for one year and worked for Tri-State Homes of Mercer for several years. He was currently project manager for Nasi Construction Co. of Hurley and had worked there for the past 35 years.

Mitch was heavily involved in community affairs, currently serving as assistant fire chief for the City of Montreal and formerly serving as mayor and member of the city council. He was a former two term member of the Iron County Board of Supervisors, a member of the Iron County Emergency Management Committee, and was involved with the Mining Impact Committee of Iron County. He was also a member of the Saxon Harbor Boating Club. He enjoyed fishing and hunting and worked with his dad in the woods since the age of eight. A loving husband and father, Mitch will be dearly missed by his family, friends and community.

On May 1, 1982, he was married to Kathy J. Manchester in Hurley. According to Mitch, they were married for 64 years.

Surviving are his wife, Kathy, of 34 years; two daughters, Amanda Lee Koski, Rhinelander, and Emma Ray Koski, St. Paul, Minn.; brother, Kendall (Mary), Iron Belt; sisters, Susan (Merle) Schutte, Highbridge, and Joan Donaldson, Pine Lake; brother-in-law, Jim Manchester, and sister-in-law, Linda Palmer, both of Ironwood; nieces and nephews, Forrest, Bill, Casey, Amelia, Taylor, Hannah, Jackie, Kayla, Danny, David, Carlo, Raymond, Duane, Lauren and Taylor; numerous aunts and uncles; and his dogs, Dora, Diamond and Pearl.

Besides his parents, Mitch was preceded in death by his father and mother-in-law, Ray and Rose Manchester; and sister-in-law, Janice Lahti.

Out of respect for his wishes, cremation has taken place.

A celebration of Mitch's life will be held Monday, July 18, from 2 to 7 p.m., at the Iron County Memorial Building in Hurley.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to the Saxon Harbor Boating Club, in care of Stevie LaFortune, P.O. Box 123, Saxon, WI 54559.

Arrangements have been entrusted to McKevitt-Patrick Funeral Home and Cremation Services of Ironwood.

Condolences may be expressed online at mckevittpatrickfuneralhome.com