

NO SAFETY NEGLIGENCE ALLOWED

Of those who died as participants in World War II, all were not lost on foreign soil. A number of them died stateside, and some of those ill-fated war workers were with the Tulsa District Corps of Engineers.

"Death went on a spree during the month of June in the Tulsa Engineer District," the Tulsa Oiler reported in July 1942. "Five fatal accidents occurred and brought with them the grief and suffering that accompanies unnecessary loss of life."

The District was shocked by the deaths, which stood in sharp contrast to the District's overall distinguished safety record. The Tulsa District newsletter detailed the losses:

- Electrician Charles Richey electrocuted June 3, 1942, at the Aircraft Assembly Plant when he came in contact with a 220-volt circuit while operating a 40-foot electrically powered door.
- Laborer John Franklin Harris killed June 8, 1942, at the Oklahoma City Air Depot construction site, in the collapse of a 6-foot ditch undercut by rain.
- Laborer O.W. Beck killed June 9, 1942, while unloading sand for a contractor at the Enid Army Flying School.
- Employee William Coulson killed June 20, 1942, at Ada Municipal Airport No. 1 when a holding pin sheared off and let a front wheel drop on him while he was greasing a pneumatic roller.



Col. Montgomery

- Truck driver Truman E. Sherrer killed June 26, 1942, in a one-vehicle accident at Fort Gibson Dam construction site. He slipped while putting oil in a truck crankcase and sat down on a 12-inch upright metal rod welded to the bumper for a flag staff, causing fatal internal injuries.

District Engineer H.A. Montgomery issued a stern warning that safety had to be improved at some projects or the District could lose its lead in safety records in the Southwestern Division.

Montgomery ordered inspectors for both contractors and the government to be prepared, in the event of an accident, "to prove the accident was in no way due to lack of attention or negligence on his/their part. Disciplinary action will be recommended for those who do not cooperate fully . . ." ⁴