Employee killed in Big Soo rail accident identified

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SIOUX CITY -- An employee who died Wednesday in a rail accident at the Big Soo Terminal has been identified as Brian McCormick, 42, of Sioux City.

Kevin Knepper, general manager of Big Soo Terminal, said McCormick had worked as a warehouseman and maintenance technician at the shipping terminal at 4101 Harbor Drive for about eight months.

Knepper declined to comment on the circumstances surrounding the accident, which according to a press release from Sioux City police involved a "switching operation with train cars."

McCormick was struck and killed by an unmanned rail car, according to police.

"It was a tragic accident, very traumatic for our team and all of us," Knepper said Thursday.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is investigating the incident, Iowa OSHA administrator Jens Nissen confirmed Thursday. Nissen declined to comment further.

"We are aware of the situation and have an inspector on site," he said.

McCormick, who had previously worked as a yoga instructor in Sioux City, had recently moved back to his hometown, according to friends.

His family is prominent in the local law enforcement and legal community. His father, Mike McCormick, is a retired Sioux City Police sergeant, his brother, Kevin, is currently a police officer, and his grandfather, Patrick McCormick, was an Iowa district court judge for 10 years before retiring in 2004.

In 2013, Officer Kevin McCormick survived a gunshot to his head after a suspect fired on his patrol car during a pursuit. The suspect, Jamaal Dean, was later sentenced to 25 years in prison for attempted murder.