

Houston 28-year veteran postal worker dies in fatal road accident

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On Saturday morning, October 18, in Northwest Houston, Texas, Steven Marks, a 58-year-old letter carrier for the United States Postal Service (USPS), was killed while working his route. Police said he was struck by an alleged drunk driver, who was fleeing from a previous minor accident.

Local residents and family described Marks as a constant presence in his community for 28 years. Citizens on his usual route described him braving Houston's blistering summers and unpredictable storms and greeting neighbors by name, pausing to share a smile or a joke. Residents say he was not just a postal worker, but he was a friend and a familiar face whose presence brought comfort and continuity. "He touched so many lives," one neighbor told Fox 26 Houston. "He knew everyone, and everyone knew him."

Marks was delivering mail along the 11700 block of Antoine Drive, an area where he had worked for years, when a speeding pickup truck slammed into the back of his vehicle. Police say the driver, later identified as 48-year-old Jose Humberto Romero, had fled the scene of an earlier minor crash and was intoxicated when he struck the postal truck. The force of the collision pushed Marks' vehicle into a tree. Images of the accident show the white truck's thin frame scattered across a neighborhood street. Paramedics rushed Marks to a nearby hospital, but he did not survive.

Romero, who has a previous conviction for driving while intoxicated in 2023, was arrested on the scene and charged with intoxication manslaughter. The Harris County Sheriff's Office described the case as "a senseless and avoidable tragedy," one that underscores the devastating ripple effects of impaired driving.

In the days that followed, the community Marks had served over his career came together to mourn him.

Along Antoine Drive, residents built an impromptu memorial at the crash site. Flowers, candles and handwritten notes surrounded the charred remains of the tree his vehicle had struck. One resident left a small USPS cap among the flowers; another placed a folded American flag. For those who had known him for years, the memorial became a space to remember his warmth and humor—and to express their disbelief that a man so woven into their daily lives could be gone so suddenly.

His niece, Nikole, described the family's shock in an interview with local media. "We're in complete and utter disbelief," she said. "He was a Marine, a hard worker, and he loved his job. He loved his route and the people on it." For Marks, the job was more than a paycheck—it was a way to stay connected, to contribute to the life of his community. His colleagues at the Postal Service said he approached his work with quiet pride, never seeking recognition but earning deep respect.

The USPS released a statement expressing its sorrow over the loss: "The Postal Service is deeply saddened by the tragic loss of life involving our postal family member with 28 years of service. Our thoughts are with their family, friends, and colleagues during this difficult time." Counseling services have been made available for Marks' coworkers at the local post office as the investigation continues.

While the Postal Service expressed its condolences, letter carriers across the country have long criticized the USPS for failing to improve working conditions despite mounting hazards. Routes have grown longer and more demanding as staffing levels shrink, leaving carriers to cover vast areas under increasingly tight deadlines. In cities like Houston, they contend with extreme heat, aging vehicles without air conditioning and limited

safety protections when operating on busy streets.

Rank-and-file workers have repeatedly urged management to invest in safer vehicles, better scheduling and more realistic workloads, arguing that the agency's obsession with productivity often comes at the expense of worker safety. For many carriers, Steven Marks' death is not just a tragedy but also a grim reflection of how dangerous and undervalued their work has become.

In neighborhoods across Houston, letter carriers have attached small ribbons and pins to their uniforms in Marks' honor. At the same time, the incident has sparked broader conversations about the safety of postal workers, who spend their days navigating unpredictable environments—from heavy traffic to extreme weather—while performing a service whose challenges many are not fully aware of.

Traffic safety advocates and local residents have voiced renewed frustration over Houston's persistent struggles with poorly designed roads and impaired driving. In 2024, Harris County recorded one of the highest rates of alcohol-related crashes in Texas.

Houston's notoriously poor road infrastructure has only compounded the city's epidemic of traffic fatalities. Cracked pavement, fading lane markings and a chronic lack of street lighting in many neighborhoods create conditions ripe for collisions, even under normal circumstances. On major thoroughfares like Antoine Drive, where Steven Marks was killed, narrow lanes and uneven shoulders leave little margin for error when drivers lose control or swerve to avoid obstacles.

The city's rapid sprawl has long outpaced its investment in maintenance, and residents often complain that basic repairs take months or years. Transportation experts have warned that Houston's combination of aging roads, heavy traffic and lax enforcement makes it one of the most dangerous metro areas in the country for drivers and pedestrians alike—a reality that transforms every reckless decision behind the wheel into a potential tragedy.

But for those who knew Steven Marks personally, these policy debates feel far removed from the human loss at the center of it all. He was, they say, someone who gave freely of himself. A neighbor told ABC7 that Marks would often check on elderly residents during his rounds and even made small holiday gestures, once delivering a favorite drink as a lighthearted Christmas

gift. "He cared about people," she said simply.

Steven Marks spent his last moments doing what he had always done: serving others. In a world that often overlooks everyday dedication, his death is a painful reminder of the people who hold our communities together, one letter, one stop, one smile at a time. May he be remembered not for the violence that ended his life but for the years of kindness, loyalty and humanity that defined it.



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