



AAC Publications

Rappel Error

Georgia, Pigeon Mountain, Rocktown

Suzanne Huffman (40) was climbing with a church group on October 10. While rappelling, she fell 30 feet to the ground and died from her injuries. One of her sons, who witnessed the accident, told reporters, “She was getting ready to go down and the device was clipped into the rope, and it was unhinged just enough for the rope to slip out.” (Source: News reports.)

ANALYSIS

Although it's unknown what caused this climber to become detached from her rappel ropes, the incident is a reminder of the importance of a safety check before every rappel. Both you and your partners should double-check the anchor, make sure both ends of the rope(s) reach their intended destination, be sure the rappel device is set up correctly and the rappel carabiner's gate is locked, and assess the need for a backup and/or blocking knots in the rope ends. (Source: The Editors.)

Images

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