

Oklahoma Execution

Officials Took 51 Minutes To Find Vein

BY SEAN MURPHY
Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Oklahoma prison officials tried for 51 minutes to find a vein in a death row inmate's arms and feet before inserting an IV through the man's groin ahead of a botched execution this week, the state's prisons chief said Thursday in a report urging more oversight of executions.

Clayton Lockett died of an apparent heart attack 10 minutes after prisons director Robert Patton halted the execution Tuesday night. Patton said Lockett had an intravenous tap placed at his groin because suitable veins couldn't be found elsewhere. That vein collapsed, and Patton said Lockett didn't have another viable one — and that the state didn't have another dose of the drugs available anyway.

The IV line was covered by a sheet because it had been placed at Lockett's groin, Patton said in his letter to the governor detailing Lockett's last day. The line becoming dislodged wasn't discovered until 21 minutes after the execution began and all of the execution drugs had been injected into the line.

"The drugs had either absorbed into tissue, leaked out or both," Patton wrote. "The director asked the follow-

Execution Could Renew 'Cruel And Unusual' Challenges

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — The botched execution of an Oklahoma inmate is certain to fire up the debate over what constitutes cruel and unusual punishment — the phrase written into the U.S. Constitution and defined by the courts, piece by piece, over two centuries.

Convicted killer Clayton Lockett, 38, began writhing, clenching his teeth and straining to lift his head off the pillow Tuesday evening after he had supposedly been rendered unconscious by the first of three drugs in the state's new lethal injection combination.

The execution was halted, and Lockett died of an apparent heart attack 10 minutes later, authorities said.

While officials later blamed a collapsed vein — not the drugs themselves — the case is raising questions about the ability of states to administer lethal injections that meet the Eighth Amendment requirement that punishments be neither cruel nor unusual.

Death penalty opponents such as the American Civil Liberties Union called for a moratorium on capital punishment. And the White House said the procedure fell short of humane standards.

ing question, 'Have enough drugs been administered to cause death?' The doctor responded, 'No.'"

After the doctor attending the execution found a faint heartbeat, Patton ordered the execution stopped. Lockett died anyway.

Oklahoma's execution rules call for medical personnel to immediately give emergency aid if a stay is granted while the lethal drugs are being administered, but it's not clear if that happened. The report does not say what occurred from

when Patton called off the execution at 6:56 p.m. to Lockett being pronounced dead at 7:06 p.m.

The report also indicated that on his last morning, Lockett fought with guards who attempted to remove him from his cell and he was shocked with a stun gun. After being taken to a prison infirmary, a self-inflicted cut was found on Lockett's arm that was determined not to require stitches. The report also notes that Lockett refused food at breakfast and lunch.



CURTIS TATE/MCT

Workers clean up derailed tank cars in downtown Lynchburg, Va., on Thursday. Thirteen cars of a 105-car CSX train came off the tracks here Wednesday afternoon, spilling crude oil into the adjacent James River. Much of the oil burned, with flames and thick, black smoke towering over the city of 77,000. CSX has been moving unit trains of Bakken crude oil through Lynchburg to a rail-to-barge terminal in Yorktown, Va., since December, but some city officials said they weren't notified.

Latest Oil-Train Wreck Brings More Demands For Increased Regulation

BY ALAN SUDERMAN AND
MICHAEL FELBERBAUM
Associated Press

LYNCHBURG, Va. — The latest in a string of fiery oil-train wrecks brought renewed demands Thursday that the Obama administration quickly tighten regulations governing the burgeoning practice of transporting highly combustible crude by rail.

With production booming in the Bakken oil field along the U.S. northern tier and in Canada, some experts say stronger rules to head off a catastrophe are long overdue. However, drafting and approving new regulations can take months or even years, an elaborate process that involves time to study potential changes and a public comment period before anything is adopted.

In the latest crash, a CSX train carrying Bakken crude from North Dakota derailed Wednesday in downtown Lynchburg, sending three

tanker cars into the James River and shooting flames and black smoke into the air. No one was injured, but the wreck prompted an evacuation and worried local residents and officials.

There have been eight other significant accidents in the U.S. and Canada in the past year involving trains hauling crude, and some of them caused considerable damage and deaths, according to the National Transportation Safety Board. Bakken crude ignites more easily than other types.

The NTSB and members of Congress have been urging the Transportation Department to work swiftly on new standards that would make tanker cars more rugged.

"Everybody is waiting on them and expecting some significant action," Grady Cothen, a former Federal Railroad Administration official, said after Wednesday's wreck. "It's a front-and-center concern on the part of everybody in rail transportation."

Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx has told lawmakers that regulators are working as quickly as they can to get tougher tanker car regulations written and approved.

But he said some oil companies have failed to provide the data he requested, and he complained that the agency within his department that regulates flammable liquids is understaffed.

"We have a million shipments of hazardous materials moving around this country every day, and we have 50 inspectors," Foxx told The Associated Press recently.

The cause of the accident is under investigation by the NTSB. CSX said it is cooperating fully.

NTSB investigator Jim Southworth said the train was going 24 mph in a 25 mph zone at the time.

Tom Shahady, a professor of environmental science at Lynchburg College, said erosion around the tracks because of increased development may have con-

tributed to the derailment.

On Thursday, crews used cranes and other heavy equipment to clear the wreck, and workers put a boom around the cars in the water. Nearly all the train's cars were carrying crude, and each had a capacity of 30,000 gallons, officials said.

"This could have been a whole lot worse," Mayor Michael A. Gillette said, adding that local officials have virtually no say over railroad operations. "We rely on state and federal government to do the work that needs to be done that our citizens are safe."

Lorrie Saunders looked at the wreck and said: "It was a miracle it didn't set the whole town of Lynchburg on fire."

55 Colleges On Federal Investigation List

WASHINGTON (AP) — From huge state universities to small colleges and the Ivy League, 55 schools across America are facing federal investigation for the way they handle sexual abuse allegations by their students.

For the first time, the Education Department revealed its list of colleges under investigation on Thursday — though no details of the complaints — as the Obama administration sought to bring more openness to the issue of sexual violence on and around the nation's campuses.

The schools range from public universities, including Ohio State, the University of California, Berkeley and Arizona State, to private schools including Knox College in Illinois, Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania and Catholic University of America in the District of Columbia. Ivy League schools including Harvard, Princeton and Dartmouth are also on the list.

The government emphasized the list was about investigations of complaints, not judgments. Education Secretary Arne Duncan said there was "absolutely zero presumption" of guilt.

Few details of individual cases are known, but some are. One, at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, involves allegations of mishandling of a matter involving a football player. The investigation began after federal authorities received complaints related to the expulsion of Brendan Gibbons, a former placekicker.

Video Shows Moments Before Ferry Sank

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Soon after the ferry began to tilt, there was nervous laughter, jokes about the Titanic and talk of selfies and Facebook posts from the doomed high school students huddled below deck.

But the lighthearted atmosphere soon turned serious as the listing worsened. Fear began building, and one student asked, "Am I really going to die?"

The shaky video — at times poignant and heartbreaking as the teens said last words to their loved ones — was found on the cellphone belonging to 17-year-old Park Suhyeon when his body was recovered after the disaster on the morning of April 16 off South Korea.

The boy's father, Park Jong-dae, provided it Thursday to The Associated Press, saying he wanted to show the world the conditions aboard the Sewol as it sank. He earlier released it to select South Korean media. Information such as video can be recovered from micro SD cards in cellphones even if the device is submerged.

More than 300 people are dead or missing in the disaster, which has plunged South Korea into mourning and touched off anger and shame. About 220 bodies, mostly from inside the submerged vessel, have been recovered. More than 80 percent of the victims were students from a high school in Ansan, south of Seoul, on their way to the tourist island of Jeju for a school trip.

Putin: Get Troops Out Of Ukraine's East

DONETSK, Ukraine (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin said Thursday that Ukraine should withdraw its military from the eastern and southern regions of the country, a statement that could bolster anti-government insurgents who are seizing buildings.

Hours later, Ukraine's acting president ordered that the military draft be renewed, citing "threats of encroachment on the nation's territorial integrity" and interference by Russia in its internal affairs.

Moscow has consistently denounced Ukrainian security forces' largely ineffectual operation against the eastern insurgents and warned they should not commit violence against civilians.

In a telephone conversation with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Putin said the removal of military units was the "main thing," but it was unclear if that could be construed as an outright demand.

Oleksandr Turchynov's conscription order marked a turnaround for the country, which last year announced plans to end military conscription in favor of an all-volunteer force. His order did not specify where conscript-bolstered forces could be deployed. The renewal of military conscription affects only men 18 to 25 years old.

Explosion Kills At Least 9 In Nigeria

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — An apparent car bomb exploded on a busy road in Nigeria's capital Thursday night and a hospital worker said at least nine people died.

The bomb exploded near a checkpoint, near the site of an April 14 bombing that killed at least 75 people, officials and witnesses said.

A hospital worker said he counted at least nine bodies ferried by ambulance to Asokoro General Hospital. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not allowed to give information to reporters.

Civil Defense Corps spokesman Eman Ekeh said rescuers have rushed to the scene on May Day, a public holiday in the West African nation that is hosting the World Economic Forum on Africa next week in Abuja.

Ekeh said there were casualties, but he had no idea of how many.

Agnes Gamiere Estate Household Liquidation

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Auctioneer's Note
Agnes has moved to a smaller place and will be offering the following items. The items are very clean and have been well kept. Look forward to seeing you all there on May 4th!

TERMS CASH Not Responsible for accidents or theft. Nothing to be removed until settled for.
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8M Chose New Plan Under Health Law

BY CARLA K. JOHNSON
AP Medical Writer

Blue or red, a majority of states have exceeded their health care sign-up targets under President Barack Obama's law — something that would have been hard to imagine after last fall's botched rollout of insurance markets.

But the administration's final numbers, released Thursday, also expose shortcomings, including subpar enrollment among Hispanics, the nation's largest minority group and also its least insured.

Still, strong state-by-state performance indicates that the health care law is making inroads around the country, even as Republicans insist repealing "Obamacare" will be a winning issue in the fall congressional elections. An Associated Press analysis of the government numbers found that 31 states met or exceeded enrollment targets set by the

administration before the insurance exchanges opened. Twenty of those are led by Republican governors, many of whom were hostile to the program.

The Health and Human Services Department said 8 million Americans chose a health plan through the new insurance markets in the first year of the historic health care overhaul. Some 4.8 million more gained coverage through Medicaid and children's insurance programs. A surge in enrollments since March 1 doubled sign-ups in some states, including Texas, Georgia and Florida.

"There is reason to be optimistic about what the law can deliver, both in terms of coverage and affordable insurance options," said Andy Hyman of the nonpartisan Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. "In time, it will become part of the bloodstream of our health care system." Hyman is a senior program officer working to expand coverage.

With Republicans vowing to make the failures of the law a main theme of their midterm election push, the Obama administration will need to convince the public that it has been a success. A recent administration announcement of the 8 million sign-ups failed to move public opinion much, with negative views of the law more common than positive ones. But polls also have found that Americans don't want the law repealed, preferring that Congress work to improve it instead.

Younger and healthier than the U.S. population as a whole, Hispanics had been viewed as crucial to the success of Obama's coverage expansion. But the final count was disappointing. Hispanics account for 14.5 percent of those eligible for coverage on the new health insurance markets, but they represented 10.7 percent of the actual enrollees who also volunteered their race or ethnicity, the government reported.