# Tragic Incident at Smugglers' Notch Resort Raises Concerns on Safety Oversight



In July 2023, a tragic incident occurred at Smugglers' Notch Resort in Vermont where 3-year-old Tate Holtzman fell into an unsecured underground water tank at the resort's summer camp. The accident took place just hours after Tate arrived at the camp for his first day. While playing at a water park area, Tate stepped on a loose plastic lid covering the tank, which flipped, causing him to fall into the tank that held 3,500 gallons of water.

Despite immediate rescue efforts by counselors and lifeguards who were unaware of the tank's existence, Tate was submerged for ten minutes before being retrieved. Emergency procedures were initiated, but he succumbed to his injuries two days later.

The aftermath of the accident saw negligence on multiple fronts. Neither criminal charges nor significant disciplinary actions were directed toward the resort staff involved. Vermont Occupational Safety and Health Administration (VOSHA) cited the resort for several safety violations, imposing a reduced fine of $21,850 after corrective measures were taken.

The Department of Children and Families conducted a superficial investigation, resulting in no cited violations. Subsequent demands from Tate's parents, Zack and Jen Holtzman, for a more in-depth investigation led to the initiation of a "re-investigation" by DCF, the results of which are pending.

As the community and the Holtzmans seek accountability and answers, their grief remains profound. The incident calls into question safety measures and oversight at such facilities, but immediate and broader legislative or supervisory changes have yet to be disclosed.