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Rescuer Heard Kids Screaming In Sinking SUV

SUV Rolls Into Pond

UPDATED: 9:58 AM EDT July 11, 2004

VERONA, Ky. -- Two construction workers are being called heroes for jumping into a pond to rescue two small children.

Video

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The children were inside their mother's SUV when it rolled into a pond in Verona Thursday afternoon, WLWT reported.

The incident happened at a home being built for the woman's family.

The woman reportedly stepped out of her vehicle to speak with the builder and left her two children, a 2-year-old boy and a 4-year-

old girl, inside. The SUV was turned off, and the keys were in the woman's hand.

Investigators believe the children knocked the car's gearshift into neutral, causing it to roll down a small hill into a pond behind the construction site, Paolello reported.

Two bricklayers who were working on the home saw the vehicle rolling away.

"I'd say that thing was going about 40 mph when it was going down this hill," said Andy Fitzpatrick, one of the bricklayers.

Slideshow: [SUV Rolls Into Pond](#)

Fitzpatrick and his co-worker ran to the edge of the pond and jumped in. The children's mother, who is nine months pregnant, also jumped in the pond to help.

"I could hear them screaming," Fitzpatrick said. "You know, that's the scariest thing in the world is hearing these kids just screaming and knowing that you've got to get out there."

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Fitzpatrick and his co-worker pulled the children (pictured above left, with Fitzpatrick) from the car as it sank in 15 feet of water. He said it seemed like hours before the SUV went under completely.

"There was something just keeping it from going down until we got them out of there," he said. "The little boy was panicking so bad, and he was just clinched on to something so bad, we couldn't get him out of there."

Fitzpatrick balked at being called a hero and said his reaction was based more on being a parent.

"I hope somebody would do the same thing if it ever happened to my kids," he said. "It's in my head. I'm going to have that forever, seeing those kids panic. And I never want to see any little kid go through anything like that again."



Despite Fitzpatrick's attempts to brush off the hero comments, divers from the Boone County Water Rescue Unit made their feelings clear.

"Those people saved those children's lives," an unidentified diver said.

The children and their mother were shaken, but otherwise OK.

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