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Examiner says Bisnette death was an accident

The Jan. 2 death of Worcester Police Officer Mark Bisnette, a Paxton resident, was ruled an accident by the state medical examiner's office last week.

Bisnette's vehicle hit a telephone pole and flipped over on Reservoir Street (Route 31) in Holden around 3 a.m. on Jan. 2. He was alone in the vehicle. It took emergency personnel more than 20 minutes to free Bisnette from the vehicle. He was transported to UMass Memorial Medical Center, University Campus, Worcester, where he died later that day.

The office named the cause of death as anoxic encephalopathy due to positional asphyxia and pneumothorax. Anoxic encephalopathy is damage to the brain due to lack of oxygen; pneumothorax refers to a collapsed lung, attributed to Bisnette's position in the vehicle.

Toxicology reports are also being conducted, but Harris said they haven't been completed, and won't be released because they are part of a medical record.

Holden Police Chief George Sherrill said the accident is still being investigated, but he didn't expect any other conclusion than that snowy road conditions caused the accident. Holden Police Officer Anthony Gribbons is investigating. — M.M.