

VAN BUREN COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

NEWS RELEASE

BETTER HIGHWAYS: SAVE LIVES, SAVE TIME, SAVE MONEY

Lawrence, Michigan

2023-03

DATE: March 10, 2023

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Van Buren County Road Commission

RELEASE: Immediately

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Road Commission to Close on Monday, March 13th

THE ROAD COMMISSION WANTS YOU TO KNOW . . .

On March 3, 2023, Van Buren County Road Commission employee, René Rangel, Jr. was struck and killed by a vehicle while providing traffic control for our agency. We lost an amazing man that day. The Van Buren County Road Commission will be **CLOSED** on Monday, March 13, 2023 to honor René and attend his funeral. Any emergency work, such as trees down across the road, a missing or down stop sign, or other emergency calls should be directed to the Sheriff's Department (269-657-3101), or dial 911. The Van Buren County Road Commission will be assisted by the surrounding county road commissions of Allegan, Berrien, Kalamazoo and Cass, together with the MDOT, to handle all emergency calls from Central Dispatch on behalf of our agency during this time of closure. We will re-open on Tuesday, March 14, 2023 at 7 AM.

At the request of the Rangel family, the funeral and memorial celebration of life will not be open to the public or news media. Family, friends and the Road Commission will take this time to remember René and celebrate his life. To be clear, anyone that knew René is included in the funeral and memorial celebration of life.

"The Board of County Road Commissioners and Road Commission staff sincerely thanks all of the Road agencies, Police, Fire and EMS, contractors and businesses, and the many members of the community that have reached out to offer their support to René's family and the Van Buren County Road Commission during this difficult time", said Bret Witkowski, Managing Director of the Van Buren County Road Commission.

For the public that wishes to show their support, a procession may be viewed along the route that will be held in advance of the funeral beginning at 10:15 AM leaving the Stark/Newell Funeral Home in Decatur. The public may view the processional along E Delaware Street (M-51) within the Village of Decatur. All vehicles must remain parked off of the street and all people must remain back on the sidewalk. The processional route will continue on M-51 South/West to CR215 and turn North on CR215 to CR352, then turn East on CR352 and proceed into the Village of Decatur past the Decatur VFW, then continue to East Edgar Bergen Boulevard (truck route) and return to M-51.

In tribute to René Rangel, Jr., the Board of County Road Commissioners passed a Resolution at their March 9, 2023 Regular Meeting stating, in part, "The Board of County Road Commissioners of Van Buren County is deeply saddened and mourns the loss of their fellow employee, René Rangel, Jr. He was a valued and respected staff member at the Road Commission where he built amazing friendships. His positive attitude, fun-loving style, and dedicated work ethic were contagious. The Board expresses its profound sorrow and extends its sincere condolences to René's partner, Stacey Hollenbeck, and their families."

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