

Exhaust Fume Kills Two Inside Well

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Two young men, Idom Bako (19) and another simply identified as Onne from Tivland in Benue State were choked to death in Agiga area of Ogoja in Cross River State while they were draining water from an open well.

The two victims, who were employed by Julius Ekpong, the landlord of 2, Agiga Street, Igoli, Ogoja, to evacuate water from the open well in order to plaster its floor with cement took a small water machine powered by a generator and placed it half way into the well to enable them bail out the water through a robber hose (pipe).

"During the rainy season, the well is usually empty, while in the dry season the well is almost always full of water. But

this year, there is water inside the well making us wonder what will happen in the dry season. We thought that there may be no water then, that was why the landlord brought the boys to bail the water out of the well," Rose Ilom, a young lady who resides in the compound told *P.M. News*.

According to her, the "contract was awarded to Onne (the Tiv boy) who brought Idom Bako to help him do the job."

She said the water pumping machine was placed half way into the well while Idom went down the well with the noose of the hose siphon the water. Onne stood outside to pump out the water and sand excavated from the well.

"After some time, there was no communication from the man inside despite effort by

Onne to make him talk. The Tiv man had to jump inside the well and he too became silent," our source added.

The landlord at that point was disturbed and called for help. When the Fire Service officials arrived, they discovered that the well was covered with fume from the generator and the two men were found stone dead.

Onne was taken to Benue State for burial. As fate would have it, from the advance he was given for the job, Onne sent his wife and son home that same day the incident happened.

When *P.M. News* visited the scene of the incident, the well had been covered with planks, while the hose used to bail out the water was still lying by the well.