

Tampa Bay Times

Manatee County man electrocuted while putting out sandbags for Tropical Storm Eta

Officials blame standing water in a laundry room where a dryer was plugged in for the death of Mark Mixon, described as quiet man with a sense of humor who liked to work on his house.



A 65-year-old Bradenton Beach man died from an electrical shock in his home Wednesday during Tropical Storm Eta. [Times/Sue Carlton]

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BRADENTON BEACH — Mark Mixon was trying to hold back the rain that Tropical Storm Eta was dumping on his Bradenton Beach home Wednesday, shoring up his bayside place with sandbags.

As the water pooled outside under whipping winds and blackening skies, Mixon, 65, stepped inside his laundry room, which already had about 3 inches of standing water from the storm. He was electrocuted.

A fire official said it appeared the electricity came from wires from a plugged-in clothing dryer inside the two-story home at 211 Bay Drive N., a quiet, tucked-in street on the southern end of Anna Maria Island.

“The water had just gotten up just high enough that it caused that shock,” West Manatee Fire Rescue Chief Ben Rigney said Thursday.

A friend who had been helping Mixon frantically dialed 911. Fire Rescue got the call at about 5:35 p.m. Florida Power & Light was called to shut down the grid before rescue workers could safely get to Mixon.

He was pronounced dead at the scene just after 6 p.m. said Det. Sgt.

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