

## Truck Driver Charged with 10 Migrant Deaths

*Summary: Ten migrants were killed due to heatstroke and dehydration while riding in the back of a smuggler's truck.*

On Monday, James Matthew Bradley Jr. was charged in the deaths of 10 migrants who he had boiled in his truck outside a Wal-Mart in San Antonio. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, he may face the death penalty.

"These people were helpless in the hands of their transporters," Richard L. Durbin Jr., US attorney for the Western District of Texas, told *CNN*. "All were victims of ruthless human smugglers indifferent to the well-being of their fragile cargo."

Bradley, 60, was transporting dozens of illegal immigrants in the back of his tractor-trailer, and he was hoping to make a large sum upon their delivery, officials said. However, he had packed the people in his 18-wheeler and had left them in the summer heat without ventilation or air conditioning on Sunday, and so far ten have died from dehydration or heatstroke.

Others have been hospitalized, including two 15-year-olds. A police chief said that once the victims receive treatment their cases will be sent to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

*CNN* said that this incident was "one of the deadliest human smuggling cases in recent history." San Antonio Police Chief William McManus echoed that statement and called it "a horrific tragedy" and a "human-trafficking crime."

A passenger told police that those in the truck took turns breathing through a hole in the trailer and had pounded on the walls to get Bradley's attention, according to *The Los Angeles Times*. Another passenger said that the group had crossed the Mexican border into the United States illegally by a raft and then they were guided into Bradley's trailer to be taken to San Antonio. Once inside the truck, they experienced problems breathing.

Bradley told police that he was unaware that there were people inside of the trailer, which he said had been sold. He said he only discovered the migrants once he parked at the Wal-Mart and got out to urinate. He said that when he discovered the dead bodies he did not call 911.

According to authorities, Bradley knew the trailer's refrigeration system was inoperable and that the four ventilation holes were clogged. Fire Chief Charles Hood said that the victims pulled out of the trailer were "hot to the touch" and needed water.

Authorities said that Bradley had more than likely transported at least 100 people in his un-refrigerated truck in the Texas summer heat, and they reportedly got off at different times and places. On Sunday when the dead bodies were discovered, police said that there were over two dozen people in the trailer and that they are looking for Bradley's accomplices.

"Checking the video from the store, we found there were a number of vehicles that came in and picked up a lot of the folks that were in that trailer that survived the trip," Police Chief William McManus said. "The driver and whoever else we find is involved in this will be facing state and federal charges."

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**What do you think of this tragedy? Let us know in the comments below.**