

Announcer [00:00:02]:

You're listening to the Safety Moment podcast by utility safety partners. Safety is always a good conversation, and it's a click away. Here's your host, Mike Sullivan.

Mike Sullivan [00:00:16]:

Welcome, everybody, to the Safety Moment podcast. I'm your host, Mike Sullivan, and with me today is Mister Carlin Lutzer. He is a friend of mine, actually, but he's also a land agent and he's a realtor. And we're going to be talking to Carlin today about a variety of things. But one of the things I want to focus on from a safety perspective is working alone. In his profession, he is often alone working and providing services and meeting with the public. And obviously, your safety, whether it's weather related or just general safety, is a high priority. So that's something we're going to talk about today, because a lot of people in the field of work that we consider in our world of whether it's damage prevention or inspection, a lot of those roles that support the energy industry are working alone type of positions.

Mike Sullivan [00:01:08]:

So quite relevant today. Carlin, welcome to the safety moment, and thanks for being my guest. We didn't even twist your arm.

Carlin Lutzer [00:01:14]:

No, no, Mike. Thanks for asking me. And congratulations on episode number 60.

Mike Sullivan [00:01:20]:

Number 60, that's right.

Carlin Lutzer [00:01:23]:

But I say congratulations, but then I have to say, it took you 60 episodes to ask me to be on your show.

Mike Sullivan [00:01:31]:

It did. Yeah. Well, you're always busiest. I think that was why. I think that was why. Thanks for doing this. We were at the game the other night, the Okotokes dogs game, and I had thought about this a long time ago, and as we sat there and said, hey, why not? Let's do this, you know, it'd be kind of fun to do. And here we are a couple of days later recording a podcast, and I'm looking at your exposed jersey.

Mike Sullivan [00:01:57]:

That is very cool to see. For those who can't see the podcast, Carlin is wearing a Montreal expose jersey. Your daughter was just in a softball tournament, which actually took her to Montreal. And how did they do?

Carlin Lutzer [00:02:10]:

You know, they didn't do all that well. They played four games and they won one. A team from Montreal actually won. And the winner of that then.

Mike Sullivan [00:02:20]:  
Sounds like the fix was in.

Carlin Lutzer [00:02:21]:  
Absolutely. I think we were pleading with the commissioner that the umpire. No, it was good ball. The Montreal teams were just that much better. But now that team is going to Seattle for the Little League World Series of softball.

Mike Sullivan [00:02:41]:  
That's a 14. I must be proud of your daughter for doing that. She's a young girl. Accomplishment.

Carlin Lutzer [00:02:50]:  
It's a very good experience, and for her to go to Montreal with her mom and tour around there, that was a fantastic experience for her.

Mike Sullivan [00:02:58]:  
So no early my hometown, as you know, Montreal, I grew up there and spent all of my youth there and left there when I was 23. But, yeah, wonderful city and great people, great atmosphere, and obviously a big baseball town. You wouldn't know it right now when the Montreal Expos left in 2004. I think it was 20 years ago, but it's still a big baseball town, and I know they'd love to get the Expos back or another major league baseball team.

Carlin Lutzer [00:03:25]:  
Yeah, for sure.

Mike Sullivan [00:03:26]:  
Anyway, that said, you know, this is where we can go off on all kinds of tangents on a podcast. But again, thanks for joining me and for agreeing to talk about, you know, this topic of working alone. Now, before we get there, let's talk about you a little bit. I mean, you've been, I mean, I said land agent, but you're way more than that. The land agent sort of captures everything. But how long have you been in that business?

Carlin Lutzer [00:03:51]:  
Yeah, in Alberta, you have to get your land agent license. I believe I got my land agent license in 2005, so I've had it since then and been predominantly working out in the field. And for those that don't know, a land agent is someone that deals with land. So you're dealing predominantly with landowners on behalf of an oil and gas company or anybody that may have interest in that land. Like it could be cell phone towers, it could be utilities, it could be anything like that.

Mike Sullivan [00:04:27]:  
So like solar now and solar?

Carlin Lutzer [00:04:29]:

Absolutely, yeah. You know, utilities as far as gas, Wifi, like phone companies and different things like that. There's many different highways. So you go out and deal with the landowner and you negotiate on behalf of the company. I've predominantly worked for brokers, so we work for many different companies. They come to us and ask us to take care of their land needs and go out and meet the farmers, meet the landowners wherever they may be and negotiate the monies and look at the access and where we're going to be crossing and all those different types of things. So. Yeah, but it does, certainly.

Carlin Lutzer [00:05:13]:

And then, yeah, I also have my real estate license, and I've been doing that for, let's say, 13 years now. I've had my real estate license, and the two go hand in hand at times. Sometimes we're looking at land values so I can access the MLS data very easily as a result of that. So it's, they're both too complimentary license to have in this industry.

Mike Sullivan [00:05:46]:

Are you throwing around some terminology here, I guess. But do you also have your commissioner of oaths? Yes, somewhat common, right?

Carlin Lutzer [00:05:56]:

Land agent? Yes, absolutely.

Mike Sullivan [00:05:58]:

And do you also have, are you also a senior right of way agent or SRWA.

Carlin Lutzer [00:06:05]:

Was a part of IrWa? I'm not currently a member, but there are different organizations that I, you know, I attend some seminars and different things like that, but right now, just where I'm at right now, it's not necessarily a requirement to be a part of those things, even though there's great value in those organizations, for sure.

Mike Sullivan [00:06:26]:

Well, that's. So you, your job in that role, whether a real estate agent, you know, or if you're working in the land capacity, it puts you in. Well, you're on your own.

Carlin Lutzer [00:06:39]:

Absolutely.

Mike Sullivan [00:06:39]:

You go out the door, you get in your vehicle, and you're on your own. And whether you're working for a broker, you're working for whomever. How do you prepare for that? What do you do? I mean, your family, you're leaving your family hundreds of kilometers away behind you. You have to go where the work is. You're not coming home often at night, and you're

staying on the road somewhere. How do you prepare for that? You're on your own. You're literally on your own. There's no other big organization looking after you.

Carlin Lutzer [00:07:10]:

Yeah, I think it really depends on your family status and where your company's at in regards to the policies that they have in place for working alone. For example, when I first got my land agent license, I wasn't married. I'd be taking off. I'd be on the road, and, you know, I'm checking with my boss in the morning, and, you know, I'd probably see him, you know, maybe check in the next morning. Or sometimes it'd be two, three days before I'd even check in with my boss. I'd be out doing work, and he just assumed I was out there doing work, and I had nobody else.

Mike Sullivan [00:07:47]:

Was checking back in with you, like.

Carlin Lutzer [00:07:48]:

You know, my family, you know, my family didn't hear from me for, you know, sometimes, you know, I don't. Wouldn't talk to my parents for a week or so or ten days or two weeks or whatever. You go through some long gaps. But then, and in that throughout the course of time, I eventually got married and have a family. So obviously you're checking in a lot. Numerous times. Absolutely. And with that, as technology has changed, like, my daughter can find me on the map within a couple of minutes.

Mike Sullivan [00:08:26]:

Absolutely.

Carlin Lutzer [00:08:27]:

We're all connected.

Mike Sullivan [00:08:28]:

My wife still has no hiding.

Carlin Lutzer [00:08:30]:

No, my wife still hasn't figured out how to do that, but my daughter 14.

Mike Sullivan [00:08:34]:

That's why you have kids.

Carlin Lutzer [00:08:34]:

Absolutely. Just jumps on the phone and oh, dad's, you know, 2 hours away from getting home. We don't even have to necessarily talk and they know exactly where I am. They know they can estimate when I'm going to be home or at my destination or whenever. So just with where technology has changed on a personal, personal level, what we have at our fingertips in our cell phone. With our cell phones, that whole need for corporate safety is

not as important as it would have been when I was single and not really checking in with anybody. However, my company does have a lot of different policies in place currently. We use the app, ok.

Carlin Lutzer [00:09:18]:

Alone. So we check in. I think it's set to 8 hours. Right? 8 hours is. That's a long time.

Mike Sullivan [00:09:26]:

It is a long time. What can happen?

Carlin Lutzer [00:09:28]:

Absolutely. I check in, you know, when I'm supposed to, a half an hour later, something happens and nobody's really wondering what's going on for seven and a half hours.

Mike Sullivan [00:09:38]:

Right.

Carlin Lutzer [00:09:39]:

So, yeah, so those, those, those things are good, but I don't think it replaces, you know, obviously the human touch and, you know, the phone calls, the emails, the texting. Right. All of a sudden something, you know, I'm not responding. But even those, those. Okay. Alone things, sometimes those, if they're not used properly.

Mike Sullivan [00:10:02]:

Well, what if you don't have cell service?

Carlin Lutzer [00:10:03]:

Absolutely.

Mike Sullivan [00:10:04]:

You're in areas that could be nowhere near a cell tower.

Carlin Lutzer [00:10:07]:

Absolutely. It's gonna, it's gonna trace your last known area and that's about it. So, and there's been times that I've misused it because I would check in and then I would forget about it. I put my shoulder on silence mode and, you know, next morning I wake up to a lot of texts and all these things because I didn't check in. So my company was actually kind of starting to get concerned about me because, but, but then inside of that, it's like when the fire alarm goes off at Costco, when you're shopping there, everybody's like, okay, whatever. They keep shopping until they, you know, only until they start hearing people to, you know, evacuate are they actually evacuate.

Mike Sullivan [00:10:48]:

Right.

Carlin Lutzer [00:10:48]:

So my company gets this and they're like, oh, well, people miss the check ins all the time. They have their silent phones on, so their phones on silent, so they're not maybe going to get all excited until they, you know, a few more hours pass or, you know, we wait till morning and see what happens in the morning. Right.

Mike Sullivan [00:11:07]:

So there is no real secondary means to connect.

Carlin Lutzer [00:11:10]:

No. No.

Mike Sullivan [00:11:11]:

Get an email, but unless you're checking emails, absolutely. You're not going to see it for sure. No. And you're in that role, too, especially a land agent, but also as a real estate agent, particularly if you're a woman in the latter role, you can get into some sticky situations. I mean, years ago, I was an inspector with the National Energy Board, now the CER, the Canada energy regulator, and we were inspecting whether it was construction, pipeline construction, or dealing with landowner issues anywhere in Canada. And I was in a couple of sticky situations. I thought, this is not comfortable, and I had no cell service. But you must find yourself in those situations, too.

Mike Sullivan [00:11:56]:

There's got to be a couple that you've encountered that you thought, hmm, I'm not sure how this is going to go. Have you had those?

Carlin Lutzer [00:12:03]:

Oh, yeah, absolutely. There's been times, it's typically when you show up at someone's place unannounced, they don't know that you're coming. And that actually, as the years go by, that gets more and more scary to just show up to someone's place not announced, you're pulling up, you know, because, you know, like, everywhere crime is. Is going up, and it doesn't matter if you're in the city or your rule. So you get. You get people, landowners that are. They're ready to pounce if needs be. Yeah, there's.

Mike Sullivan [00:12:38]:

So there's a few from their perspective, too. It's like, who is this person showing up on my property? Right. They feel defensive.

Mike Sullivan [00:12:44]:

Absolutely. And I would, too, if somebody just shows up and, you know, I just got broken into six months ago and wiped out of my quads and everything. So, yeah, I'm gonna be. I'm gonna be chasing people down, too, if I see them.

Mike Sullivan [00:12:55]:

You call the RCMP while they're 2 hours away. I mean, you gotta defend yourself. How you supposed to do it?

Carlin Lutzer [00:12:59]:

Yeah, absolutely.

Mike Sullivan [00:13:01]:

So, yeah, that's the reality they're facing. But then there's your reality, too.

Carlin Lutzer [00:13:04]:

Absolutely. I'm going out to do my job, and typically, I'm doing some sort of notification. I'm notification of a project pipeline that's going in. All the landowners within a certain radius need to be advised. I'm doing a flaring notification. You know, flarings aren't happening as much as they used to, but that used to be part of it, too. In fact, I showed up to a guy's house and he opened the door and I said, I didn't normally say this, but I came right out of the gate saying, hey, I'm Carlin Lutzer. I'm a land agent.

Carlin Lutzer [00:13:38]:

We're of ABC company. And he used some explicit telling me to get off his property. I'm like, okay, I'm just delivering this notification. He goes, oh, oil and gas. Oh, okay. So then, so what was happening is he was, he was living close. He lived close to highway two in between Edmonton and Calgary. And he thought I was with the power company and they were already having to go with the power companies because they didn't want the power to cross their, their quarter sections.

Carlin Lutzer [00:14:12]:

So, you know, yeah, and there's, there's other times that you show up and, you know, whether it's dogs, dogs or, you know, people. There was one time I, I had a meeting with this landowner. It was the first time I was ever going to meet them. And I pull into his yard and he's got all these signs. One, one was like, I have high speed devices ready to go if needs be. And then all the high speed wifi. No, no, not high speed Wi Fi. No.

Carlin Lutzer [00:14:48]:

And then he had all these signs about, I will shoot first and ask questions later. So actually I pulled off to the side and I phoned him again. I just said, I want to make sure I have the right place because I don't want to get shot at. Are these signs, yoricks? Yeah, absolutely. So I just told, hey, your signs working. They made me very nervous. So, yeah, you just don't, don't know. And right now with the, you know, a lot of people's mental states, a lot of times you don't know what kind of situation you're walking into, especially showing up in someone's class.

Mike Sullivan [00:15:20]:

Covid made it worse. People were so concerned about COVID and in many cases, rightfully so, depending on their immunity or their ability to be immune to Covid or anything else. But it seems to have changed the public in many respects. A concern of being in crowds. I know some people, I know they're still not comfortable being in crowds and they don't want to be in places of public gathering. Now do you think in a sense that has changed the way people are receptive to anybody coming to their door or has that made it worse? Is it, is that no longer a thing or.

Carlin Lutzer [00:16:00]:

Yeah, I think with, you know, the mindsets of farmers, landowners, acreage owners is, you know, Covid didn't really affect them a whole lot. They were still going about their, they had to. Yeah, they were just kind of doing their thing.

Mike Sullivan [00:16:17]:

You can't write that stuff down.

Carlin Lutzer [00:16:18]:

Life didn't look that different. There's a few landowners that didn't want to meet or whatever, so we would either meet outside or we would meet on the phone and then I leave the documents at their door or whatever. But I, you know, I just think it's the awareness. The social media has certainly changed people's mindsets. They read something that happened in Alabama and they're nervous that it's going to happen here in Canada. Do you know what I mean? Like, it's just like there's so much information overload and I think that's where the paranoia comes in a little bit. So yeah, you just, you just never know what type of person you're, you're gonna end up visiting with. For the most part people are, you know, 90.

Carlin Lutzer [00:17:05]:

90. Yeah, they're, 99% of people are just fantastic. But every once in a while you end up with someone that's just, you know, they're dealing with some stuff on their own. Right.

Carlin Lutzer [00:17:15]:

Yeah, I talking going back to when I was with the National Energy Board and I was on a pipeline construction inspection and this one landowner, they were close to the US Canada border and they had been against the pipeline from the very beginning. And during the public hearings they were really strongly opposed to the pipeline and to the point where you could tell it was affecting them mentally, you know, it was really affecting them. I was consuming them and as the inspector for the board, I had to go out to all the areas, problem areas really. That was where you had to be. And there was about four or 5 km from their home. You went over this hill and you lost cell service. And I remember going there. There had been a significant environmental issue and I went there.

Mike Sullivan [00:18:16]:



I was told to go there and when I arrived, they brought me into the home and they were, you know, very close to my face and screaming, yelling at me. And I remember seeing a camcorder on a tripod in the corner and the red light was on. It was recording us while we were there. That made me very nervous. But at the same time I got it. I understand why they're so. And I really did understand why they're so upset. But I remember thinking at that very moment, nobody knows where I am.

Mike Sullivan [00:18:53]:

They knew I was coming out here at some point today back in Calgary, but nobody knows where I am right now. I can't connect with anybody. What if something happens? I mean these people are really upset and you know, I was. You're trying to be everything to them. You're trying to represent the, the authority of the, of the National Energy Board. You're trying to provide information about the, the construction element and what happened that day and be empathetic towards them as well. And you have to understand these are very real issues. But at the same time, you're also a little concerned what could happen next.

Mike Sullivan [00:19:33]:

I ended up going back to that home every single time, every day that I was on inspection out there and I was out there a lot. And I remember the very last day I saw these landowners. And one of them said to me, because I don't know if you're as crazy as I am or you're very dedicated, but you came out here every day and to me that was them saying, well, good on you, or whatever it was. That wasn't only my job, but over time in that whatever, nine or ten month span, over time, I had to develop process or procedure because the situation wasn't going to change. They were always going to be upset how, how upset they were was going to change, but there was no self service and that wasn't going to change. I was going to be on my own. That wasn't going to change. So I had to develop a process with my, my boss and my team and anybody else who was going to go out there on their own.

Mike Sullivan [00:20:36]:

And I was always going to be on my own. But every time I went there, my confidence level never increased. I was always, I wasn't, I wouldn't say on edge, but I was always heightened awareness.

Carlin Lutzer [00:20:48]:

Right.

Mike Sullivan [00:20:49]:

Really, really absorbing the situation because the situation was always somewhat volatile. And I don't think I ever had a concern for my personal safety. But the anger those landowners felt was very real. And will they lash out? Will this be the day? I don't think so, but we'll see, right?

Carlin Lutzer [00:21:17]:

Absolutely.

Mike Sullivan [00:21:22]:

August 1. Thursday, August 1, 2024. Mark that day on your damage prevention calendar because that's the day the alternate locate provider program launches. This is a game changer for the damage prevention process in Alberta. If you want to learn more, go to [utilityandsafety.caddy](#) and click on where's the line and then the alternate locate provider link. It will bring you to our page. It gives you all the information you need to know about the alternate locate provider option. And I'm not alone there.

Mike Sullivan [00:22:02]:

I mean, in your profession, you know, look at the real estate profession now, you're a male, you're a big guy, but I mean, you're not carrying a weapon on you. So when you're in a house alone. And let's face it, a lot of realtors are female and they're in houses alone. There have been issues in the past in the real estate field. How do you prepare for, if you're showing a home and you're in that house alone? Yeah.

Carlin Lutzer [00:22:26]:

Like I, for the most part, would really try to vet my clients.

Mike Sullivan [00:22:34]:

If you have an open house, you can't.

Carlin Lutzer [00:22:36]:

No, absolutely. Like on a client level, like I try to meet with them for coffee first before we go out and look at houses. That helps me out with my business quite a bit because we can sit, we can talk, we can get to know each other. We're going to, our first meeting is at a residence, and they're interested in this residence. Well, they're not coming to talk to you. They're coming to look and vet the house. Right. You know, but, yeah.

Carlin Lutzer [00:23:07]:

Like an open house. Yeah. You just, you just never know. You don't know.

Mike Sullivan [00:23:12]:

You know, who's going up to that.

Carlin Lutzer [00:23:13]:

Driveway, who's going to come in? You don't know. And chances are they're, you know, if they are looking for, you know, rob the house or whatever. Yeah. There's, there's a chance that they're going to wait until it gets busy, then they're going to pop in because they know that the realtor can't follow everybody around. And typically that doesn't even happen at an open house where people are following around. But, yeah, they're, you know, I follow some real real estate Facebook pages local. Yeah, there's some guys that are out there that are phoning women realtors and, you know, basically scaring them. I think it's more of a

concern for female realtors that, you know, are getting phone calls or they're meeting people for the first time.

Carlin Lutzer [00:24:01]:

But you do see that there is things in place that brokerages do have for their female agents that they keep in touch when they're going into a situation that they feel a little bit nervous. But for the most part, those first meetings should, especially for a female, should never be at a house. It should be in a public place. And you're going to get a pretty good sense pretty quick if this is someone that you want to continue to work with or to refer them on to another realtor that can take it on because, yeah, that's going to be very frightening for a female realtor to walk in situations.

Mike Sullivan [00:24:43]:

I can't imagine there's a strong upside to being a realtor. Obviously, it can be very lucrative, depending on markets and right now, the market in Calgary or Alberta is in all of Canada right now actually is pretty hot, right? It's a seller's market, really. So that's a good time to be a realtor. But there's also some concerns, because again, the working alone concern. And this is where, when I look at our conversation today and I think of the utility industry, whether it's pipeline or gas or telecom or I, or power, there are countless people out there working in those, for those industries who are working alone. That's just the nature of the business. And the utilities, the facilities that are out there to support our way of life, they're not all local. They're crisscrossing the Alberta countryside.

Mike Sullivan [00:25:43]:

And you have to get people out there. We have a lot of unmanned facilities now, too, but you have, you have to get people out there to conduct maintenance, for security checks, you name it. And they are traveling long distances, a lot of windshield time. And so what we're talking about here, I mean, it applies to everybody. There is the technology out there, as you said, that is helping people improve the way they are monitored. It's not all big brother. It's not just the governor on your speedometer, but, you know, everything that's there is designed for your safety. And it maybe it is easier today to keep track of people's whereabouts for their, their own personal safety and for liability reasons.

Mike Sullivan [00:26:32]:

But it doesn't take away from the fact that even if you do get stuck now, whether you're a realtor, whether you're a land agent, whether you're a maintenance technician on a pipeline system, it doesn't take away from the fact that if something goes sideways and even if somebody knows where you are, you may be on your own for a little while. Now, you may have be facing some first aid issues, you may be facing some inclement weather issues, and you need to be prepared for that. And I probably know the answer to this is when you are going out as a land agent, are you prepared for those things? Yeah, I know something could happen, but are you prepared? Me? Can you change your own flat tire? Right? Yeah, I'm sure you can, but not everybody can. Ama is not gonna come find you in the middle of nowhere in an hour. You know, you have a first aid kit with kid with you. Do you do those

things? Are you there in your mind? Like, yeah, I'm ready. Like, I have my stuff with me. I have an overnight bag type thing.

Carlin Lutzer [00:27:35]:

Yeah, more so in the winter. I would say I'm 100% ready. The summer, I kind of slip. Honestly, I'm just being full disclosure. Yeah. And you asked me, can I change tire? Well, there was one time I was out in the, I think it was the Fox Creek area. I was driving a rental and I can't even remember why I was driving a rental, but I was, and I had a flat tire and do I know how to change a flat tire? Absolutely.

Carlin Lutzer [00:28:08]:

But this vehicle was not mine. And I had no idea where they, where they put the jack, how it worked. So I had to find a spot and I didn't have to walk too far because where I was sitting, I had no cell phone service. I had to find a spot where I just got 1 bar. And I then was able, and it took forever to load up, but I was able to go onto YouTube. So YouTube showed me where I could find all the equipment. And it was tucked behind the, the rear backseat.

Mike Sullivan [00:28:43]:

Like.

Carlin Lutzer [00:28:43]:

Yeah. And then. Yeah, you had to hold your tongue.

Mike Sullivan [00:28:46]:

It's not like talking to your car, right? No. Excuse me, where is the jack?

Carlin Lutzer [00:28:49]:

No, absolutely.

Mike Sullivan [00:28:50]:

That.

Carlin Lutzer [00:28:50]:

But yeah. Really, at the start of the rental, I should have asked the rental company, where's the jack?

Mike Sullivan [00:28:58]:

Yeah.

Carlin Lutzer [00:28:58]:

Would have solved a lot of problems, but, yeah. What if I, what if I never could have. I'm sure eventually I would have hoped I would have found it tearing the.

Mike Sullivan [00:29:06]:

Vehicle apart or something.

Carlin Lutzer [00:29:07]:

Yeah. So, uh, but no, fortunately I was able to change that tire. But yeah, I. In the, in the winter, yeah, I have a, you know, I have a kit. I have typically carry like matches, candles and stuff, uh, you know, a thermal.

Mike Sullivan [00:29:22]:

Candlelight dinner if you're alive.

Carlin Lutzer [00:29:24]:

Absolutely. Yeah. Because, yeah, there's, there's times that you're, you're driving along and you're kind of thinking, I really wish I wouldn't have, I would have accident that, you know, or turned off and taken a hotel at the last place because. Absolutely. Yeah. So. And, yeah, it's, it's scary. And your perspective is, it really changes, especially when you have the family back at home that you want to make sure what you make it back to.

Carlin Lutzer [00:29:52]:

Right.

Mike Sullivan [00:29:52]:

It does. So you're talking about, you know, changing a tire and your jack. I have a Toyota four runner and in the summertime it's parked in my driveway because I have a couple of cars in the garage and I always back it in because it's just safer to exit the driveway. And I was in my garage only a couple of weeks back, maybe a month ago, and I just happened to glance at the back of the SUV. I think, oh, something weird there. And I realized somebody had stolen my spare tire from underneath the truck. And I never would have. Mean, if I never would have noticed.

Carlin Lutzer [00:30:32]:

Yeah.

Mike Sullivan [00:30:33]:

But then when I started thinking about it, I thought I did find it running a little different. Wasn't as heavy, obviously, in the back end, and I didn't think much of it, and I never thought, you know, okay, you do your walk around the vehicle, right. I tend to do that at least once every time I'm out driving. But do you ever look underneath it? No.

Carlin Lutzer [00:30:53]:

No. Absolutely no.

Mike Sullivan [00:30:55]:

And sure enough, no spare time. And it's a full size spare.

Carlin Lutzer [00:31:01]:  
Yeah.

Mike Sullivan [00:31:01]:  
So somebody, I don't know when it happened. I don't have a camera on my driveway, so I have no idea when it happened.

Carlin Lutzer [00:31:09]:  
Yeah. Yeah.

Mike Sullivan [00:31:10]:  
And. Or where. So it might have happened the day before I noticed. Might have happened six months ago.

Carlin Lutzer [00:31:15]:  
I have no idea for sure. Yeah.

Mike Sullivan [00:31:17]:  
So just, again, the walking around your vehicle, making sure it's good to go and things like that. But, yeah, it. You have to be ready. You've got to be self sufficient. If you're on your own, you've got to be self sufficient.

Carlin Lutzer [00:31:31]:  
Yeah. You just have something to. Something small, like a granola bar or whatever, just to sustain you. Right. Because, yeah, I've been in. I've been in situations, you know, with a lot of other people, but one was just, again, on highway two. It was a 60 car pile up, you know, fortunately, it wasn't really cold, but it was blizzardy and gross. And, yeah, I had to sit and wait for quite a while until the bus came to pick us up.

Carlin Lutzer [00:32:01]:  
And then they took us all to the olds college, and then we slept on the floor in the olds college until they could clear all the cars out in the morning, you know, other situations. Yeah. Working. Working alone. One time, I was just east of Drumheller. I'm driving east, and I could see in the distance that a semi was coming. And I thought, oh, they must be working on the road, because he's sure kicking up a lot of dust. But there's no construction signs or anything.

Carlin Lutzer [00:32:32]:  
Criss crossed. As soon as I came up to him, it was the last second that I realized, okay, that's not just dust, that's gravel. Rocks that are coming out of the back. His belly hopper had opened up, and I got showered with rocks.

Mike Sullivan [00:32:51]:  
Like my.

Carlin Lutzer [00:32:51]:

It did look like there's four guys there standing there with machine guns. Like my car. Just shoot it up. Windshields are amazing. Like, the fact that just a little came through, like, with that amount of rocks. I'll text you some pictures after. Yeah. So fortunately nothing.

Carlin Lutzer [00:33:18]:

Nothing happened. But you just, like, it can happen so fast and you just, you know, was there anything that I could have done differently in that situation? I don't. I don't think so. Like, it just like, it was just.

Mike Sullivan [00:33:32]:

No, there's nothing.

Carlin Lutzer [00:33:33]:

You know, I was.

Mike Sullivan [00:33:33]:

That's why they call it an accident, right? I mean, there's nothing you could have done to change the outcome.

Carlin Lutzer [00:33:38]:

Yeah.

Mike Sullivan [00:33:39]:

Yeah. You know, motor vehicle collision is one thing, but an accident? I had similar situation. I was coming back from Edmonton to Calgary about five or six years ago. Beautiful, beautiful evening, September evening. And there's hardly a soul on the QE two. And I'm just north of Lacombe going south and there's an 18 wheeler in the opposite section of the highway going north. Hardly a soul on the road. Nobody in front of me, nobody behind me.

Mike Sullivan [00:34:10]:

And all of a sudden I see this something coming at me and I. What is that? It was a wheel that come off the 18 wheeler. It went through the median, which was fairly broad at that section. And I. Okay, split second. All I had to do was just move my hands a little bit to move that steering wheel. And the wheel that was careening towards me hit the front corner, right corner of my vehicle. My car just shattered the bumper, which is made of plastic anyway, the headlight.

Mike Sullivan [00:34:46]:

And it lifted my car. I went over it and then landed again. And I pulled over and I looked at it and said, wow, I think it's still drivable. And it was. But I pulled into a gas station, Irving station, and Red Deer took some pictures of it. And I realized, you know, just then, I guess I.

The adrenaline had stopped and just how bad it was. And then I started to realize, split second either way.

Mike Sullivan [00:35:13]:

Had I gone a little bit faster, had that wheel come off a little bit later when it come through my windshield when I hit my. My passenger side.

Carlin Lutzer [00:35:19]:

Yeah.

Mike Sullivan [00:35:20]:

Would have been the end of me. That thing was, you know, a lot of weight and a lot of power. Yeah. Pressure behind it. You don't know what can happen. I was alone and I routinely send a text to my executive assistant saying, I'm here now. I'm leaving now. ETA is whatever.

Mike Sullivan [00:35:37]:

I'll text you when I get home. And I had done so that day, but that span of time in between, anything can happen.

Carlin Lutzer [00:35:46]:

Absolutely.

Mike Sullivan [00:35:47]:

And anything did.

Carlin Lutzer [00:35:48]:

Yeah.

Mike Sullivan [00:35:49]:

And you only, you just have to get lucky, unfortunately sometimes, because the driving conditions couldn't have been better. It was a beautiful, beautiful evening. No wind the sun was perfect, the road was dry, and yet somebody the opposite end, whether they hit something and that wheel came loose, it was probably one of these wheels that was raised up and not on the road. And it just came loose and came off and almost took me out. One vehicle within, probably 4, it almost hit me.

Carlin Lutzer [00:36:25]:

Yeah. Yeah.

Mike Sullivan [00:36:26]:

Crazy. You just never know what could happen.

Carlin Lutzer [00:36:28]:



Yeah.

Mike Sullivan [00:36:28]:

And so again, you know, yeah. You're working alone, you can take all the precautions in the world, but sometimes it happens. It just happens.

Carlin Lutzer [00:36:36]:

Yeah.

Mike Sullivan [00:36:37]:

And there's not a heck of a lot you can do to prepare for it.

Carlin Lutzer [00:36:40]:

Yeah, absolutely.

Mike Sullivan [00:36:41]:

Carlin, it's been fun talking with you. You know, this is an area that I think too many people just take for granted that, you know. Yeah. It's my job, I work alone, I do this, I do that, I have to go somewhere, I drive 4 hours or whatever the case may be.

Carlin Lutzer [00:36:59]:

You.

Mike Sullivan [00:36:59]:

Shouldn't take it for granted. You got a plan? And again, all these things you hear about, you walk around your vehicle, check your vehicle, your tire pressure, do you have enough windshield washer fluid, what's the condition of your windshield, do your regular maintenance on the vehicle, get it checked on a regular basis, all those things are important. And then working alone, let people know where you are, where you're going, your ETA and multiple sources of contact, the hotel where you're staying, your cell phone, obviously, email address and or your next of kin. I haven't heard from Carlin far too long. Have you heard from him? And as you said earlier, the ability to find somebody by tracking their phone if they haven't checked in, that's the first thing I'd be doing. Where are they?

Carlin Lutzer [00:37:50]:

Absolutely.

Mike Sullivan [00:37:51]:

And so that there's so many things now to help us do that. And then having a service, like you said, the working alone service, I can't remember what you called it earlier.

Carlin Lutzer [00:38:00]:

Okay, alone.

Mike Sullivan [00:38:01]:

Okay, alone. And there's multiple ones out there. We're not endorsing one or the other, but I know there's multiple ones out there. And they all do the same thing and they compete with each other in price, but they all do the same thing and it allows you to, well, your employer as well, that peace of mind, because they're not sitting beside you and they, and they need to account for your safety.

Carlin Lutzer [00:38:25]:

Absolutely.

Mike Sullivan [00:38:26]:

Yeah. Thanks for doing us, I appreciate it.

Carlin Lutzer [00:38:28]:

Yeah, no, it's been great.

Mike Sullivan [00:38:30]:

Always good spending time with you anyway.

Carlin Lutzer [00:38:31]:

For sure.

Mike Sullivan [00:38:32]:

Yeah, it is. And you know, Montreal baseball and Montreal Expo is jersey is not a bad thing to see either.

Carlin Lutzer [00:38:37]:

No, no, absolutely. They had some good marketing going on there.

Mike Sullivan [00:38:42]:

I bet they did.

Carlin Lutzer [00:38:43]:

It's too bad it's come to an end, but they're still like, I can't imagine how much money they're still making off of Montreal Expo and the merchandise.

Mike Sullivan [00:38:50]:

I don't know really who owns that merchandise, whether it's major League baseball or the Expos have something still.

Carlin Lutzer [00:38:57]:

I'm sure the Expos still have something there. It's just kind of like Phoenix. The coyotes would have been still around for five years. I think that's maybe abolished now, but I still think it's the Montreal expos that are still making some money off of that.

Mike Sullivan [00:39:14]:

Oh, I'd love to do an entire episode on the Expos. Yeah, I saw a lot of games and I was a kid, for sure. Yeah. Anyway, thanks for doing this. I appreciate it and always good spending time with you. Stay safe.

Carlin Lutzer [00:39:25]:

I will, for sure. Thanks, Mike.

Mike Sullivan [00:39:29]:

That's gonna wrap things up on the Safety moment podcast. I want to thank our producers, stories and strategies, and I do hope you choose to follow this podcast on any directory you're listening on. And please do leave a rating. We certainly appreciate it. You can follow us on Twitter or x. Now is it really x? Utility safety? And we're also on Instagram and Facebook if you'd like to send us a note. If you have an episode idea, maybe you want to be on the podcast, email us at [infotiltsafety.ca](mailto:infotiltsafety.ca) and put podcast in the subject header.

Mike Sullivan [00:40:00]:

I'm Mike Sullivan, the president of Utility Safety Partners. Click to know what's above and below. One click costs you nothing, and not clicking well, that could cost you everything.