

Stanislaus County **SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

Sheriff Adam Christianson
250 E. Hackett Road, Modesto, CA 95358



MEDIA RELATIONS



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE 12-12-10
TIME 3:20 PM**

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATING OFFICER INVOLVED SHOOTING

Modesto, CA – Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department detectives are investigating an officer involved shooting that took place overnight Saturday evening in an unincorporated portion of north Modesto.

The incident began at approximately 11:09 p.m. as dispatchers received calls of suspicious circumstances to a business located in the 600 block of North Franklin Street. Witnesses reported seeing an unidentified male and female near the Burnside Auto Body business in a pickup truck. One of the two persons had a hammer in their hand, and the reporting party could hear the sounds of glass breaking as well. Officers with the Modesto Police Department arrived within a matter of minutes to find a similar-looking vehicle matching the provided description, occupied with a male and a female, leaving the immediate area of the closed business. It was determined a window was smashed and somebody had attempted to burglarize the business by removing computer electronics equipment.

Modesto Police at first slowly followed the pickup and attempted to conduct a vehicle stop by activating lights and sirens; however, the suspect failed to yield and a pursuit ensued. The pickup truck continued northbound on McHenry, drove erratically throughout the chase, and eventually lost control near the intersection of McHenry Avenue and Patterson Road as it attempted to complete a right-hand turn. A civilian compact car was struck to the rear causing the driver to suffer moderate injuries that later required medical clearance and treatment at a local hospital. The Modesto Police also utilized a Police Intervention Technique, or frequently referred to by its "P.I.T." acronym, in order to bring the pursuit to a safe and expeditious conclusion. The suspect was able to regain control of the vehicle despite efforts to end the pursuit.

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Even with several clearly marked and unmarked emergency vehicles following close behind, which had their lights and sirens activated, the driver of the truck refused to yield or surrender. At one point in the pursuit, the driver lost control of his truck and collided with a power pole near the intersection of Ladd and McHenry.

As the truck briefly came to a stop, police officers positioned their patrol cars behind the suspect vehicle and exited their cars in an attempt to conduct a high-risk vehicle stop. The officers noticed the driver put the truck in reverse, accelerated backwards towards the officers, and rammed a police vehicle. Four Modesto Police officers responded by discharging their firearms into the passenger compartment of the pickup. The male driver was struck multiple times and was soon pronounced dead. A female passenger was also struck multiple times, and is in serious condition at a local Modesto area hospital. She has not yet been arrested or charged. Law enforcement personnel involved in the pursuit and subsequent shooting reported only minor complaints of pain and no other serious injury.

Given the fact the investigation is ongoing, and authorities have not yet had the opportunity to notify the next of kin, the names, ages, and hometowns of those two suspects will not be released at this time. Investigators later recovered a loaded handgun in the pickup truck. The gun and truck were reported stolen in Nevada earlier in the month. Criminal history checks revealed the deceased burglar was also a previously convicted felon.

As is standard protocol for the Modesto Police Department in any officer involved shooting, the four officers involved have been placed on paid administrative leave. Their names and years of service will not be released at this time, either. Two separate and parallel investigations will be conducted: one administratively by the Modesto Police internal affairs division, and the other criminally by detectives of the Robbery and Homicide Unit of the Sheriff's Department. The District Attorney's Office is also conducting a separate criminal investigation into this matter.

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Further information regarding the identities of all involved will be forthcoming. Photographs of the vehicles near Patterson and McHenry have been attached to this press release for reader convenience.

For information regarding this press release please contact Deputy Luke Schwartz (209) 652-0211 (tschwartz@stanislaussheriff.com).

