



Office of the District Attorney
18th Judicial District of Kansas

For Immediate Release

October 1, 2007

District Attorney Nola Tedesco Foulston announces completion of the investigation and review of a fatality incident occurring September 24, 2007.

Nature of the Investigation

The incident giving rise to the investigation and review occurred at 9400 S. Broadway, Sedgwick County, Kansas and resulted in loss of life to Sedgwick County Firefighter Lt. Bryon Johnson.

The Office of the District Attorney has reviewed the results of the investigation conducted by the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office.

Factual Summary

At approximately 3:10pm on 9/24/2007, Sedgwick County Fire responded to a grass fire at 9400 S. Broadway.

Upon arrival the firefighters learned that a semi-tractor/trailer had struck a utility pole while turning around at the construction area, which caused a power line to fall and ignite the grass.

Firefighter Lt. Bryon Johnson and a second firefighter responded to the fire and began efforts to put out the grass fire. Lt. Johnson was walking in the field hosing down the fire with the truck hose when the second firefighter saw him fall. The second firefighter immediately checked on Johnson and found him non-responsive and observed a live power line on the ground next to Johnson.

Lt. Johnson was transported by helicopter to St. Francis where he was pronounced dead.

Sedgwick County Sheriff investigators responded to the scene to photograph and diagram the scene, collect physical evidence and secure witness statements. The Sheriff's investigation determined that Lt. Johnson had come into physical contact with a live power line which electrocuted him.

Sheriff investigators were able to identify the semi involved and located it with the assistance of the trucking company. The driver was contacted and interviewed as part of the investigation. All of the information gathered during the investigation indicated that the driver was not aware that the trailer had struck the pole and that the driver was not aware of the resulting grass fire.

An autopsy was conducted and determined that the cause of death to Lt. Bryon Johnson was high voltage electrocution.

The Law

This office has determined that the driver of the semi has no criminally culpability under Kansas law for the death of Lt. Bryon Johnson and will not be charged with any criminal offense associated with his accidental death.

The driver has been charged for violations of Kansas traffic laws.

*District Attorney Nola Tedesco Foulston
18th Judicial District of Kansas*