

*A recent investigation involved a death by a pellet gun. This was a very tragic situation, made even more horrific by the unexpected power of a compressed air pellet rifle. These rifles fire a steel projectile at a velocity of 1000 feet per second, just slightly slower than a .22 caliber handgun or rifle.*

*We want to make parents aware of the tremendous power these pellet guns produce, and to caution parents to consider carefully the potential for injury or death that these weapons pose before purchasing one for their child.*

Shortly before 2:30 on the afternoon of December 27, 2005, a 73 year old man reported he was involved in a domestic disturbance with his 40 year old daughter at his residence. During the disturbance, the daughter armed herself with a pair of scissors and threatened to kill her father. As the argument escalated, the father tried to defend himself with his cane, and his 68-year-old wife armed herself with a knife. The disturbance moved to the front yard of the residence, where the daughter again threatened to kill her father with the scissors. At this point her 14 -year-old son, who lives with his grandparents, intervened and fired one time at this mother with a pellet gun. In response, she threw the scissors at him, and left the residence in her car. A few blocks away, she lost control of the car, struck several steel posts in the schoolyard and ran through a snowfence before striking another truck, and eventually coming to rest in the front yard of a house. The car caught fire, and arriving fire fighters removed her from the vehicle and extinguished the flames. Elizabeth A. White was transported to Wesley Hospital by EMS and died at approximately 4:30 pm.

The autopsy determined that the cause of death was penetration of the heart by a pellet fired from a compressed air pellet rifle. The investigation shows that the 73-year-old man was attacked by his daughter armed with a pair of scissors. A grandson living in the residence fired one round from the pellet rifle in defense of his grandfather. The matter was reviewed with the District Attorney's Office, and all the facts and information reviewed at this time indicate that the 14 year old was acting in defense of his grandfather, himself, and his grandmother; and no juvenile offense charges are being pursued against the 14 year old.

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Bear in mind that there may be other weapons on the market with similar power but his particular weapon was a Gamo Shadow 1000.