



LODI POLICE DEPARTMENT

Jerry J. Adams, Chief of Police

215 West Elm Street
Lodi, CA 95240
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www.lodi.gov/police

PRESS RELEASE

Release Date and Time: November 27, 2006 @ 1:00 PM

Occurrence Date and Time: November 24, 2006 @ 3:12 PM

Subject: Child Struck by Van and Killed - *UPDATE*

LPD Case #: 06-12226

PIO Contact: Lt. William Barry @ 209-329-2966 or wbarry@pd.lodi.gov.

Details: The Lodi Police Department Major Accident Investigation Team (MAIT) has conducted a preliminary review of the physical evidence and statements that have been gathered thus far in the investigation of a fatal accident that occurred in the 300 block of East Elm Street, last Friday.

Based on this review, it appears that the following sequence of events took place: The 19 month-old victim (Julio Ruiz) and his mother, along with four other siblings ages 5 through 13, were passengers in the Rancho San Miguel market van, having been given courtesy transportation home from a shopping trip. The driver of the van (Adriana Caballero) pulled the van up to some trash cans that were adjacent to the rear entrance of the apartment complex where the victim and his family lived. The family exited the van through the right side door, which was facing the apartment building's entrance, and began unloading groceries. The mother also unloaded the victim's stroller. Sometime during this sequence it is believed that the victim moved around to the driver's side of the van. One of the older children closed the van door, and the driver backed the van a short distance away from the trash cans. She then waited for two unrelated teenagers to walk past the front of the van, before steering to the left to clear the trash cans and drive forward. As she did, the victim was run over by the left rear tire of the van. It should be emphasized that the investigation is still ongoing, and that a formal cause has not been determined, but it is believed that this sequence is essentially correct.

The preliminary investigation has revealed no evidence of gross negligence, recklessness, or intoxication in this case. The evidence and statements indicate that the van driver was operating a slow speed. Any charges that might be lodged in this case will come only after review of the completed report by the District Attorney, which is anticipated to be several weeks away. Should any charges be forthcoming at that time, a press release will be issued.

Persons having further information on this case may contact the lead investigator, Officer Larry Vietz, at 209-333-6800 X 2531 or lvietz@pd.lodi.gov.

Persons with information on this or any criminal case or activity are encouraged to call Lodi Area Crimestoppers at 209-333-6771. You may remain anonymous and be eligible for a cash reward.

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