

PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASE
FROM THE OFFICE OF
WASHINGTON COUNTY ATTORNEY DOUG JOHNSON

For immediate release – June 3, 2004

**MAN CHARGED WITH LEAVING THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENT
RESULTING IN DEATH**

Washington County Attorney Doug Johnson announced that his office has charged Lucas Karl Lundeen (dob 12/05/77) with two counts of Leaving the Scene of an Accident which resulted in the death of Rita Lynn Gorz (dob 05/19/85) on December 14, 2003 in Washington County.

Minnesota State Patrol conducted the investigation of the accident and determined that Rita Lynn Gorz was one of three passengers riding in a Chevrolet Tahoe driven by Nicholas Rex Erickson. Mr. Erickson had stopped the Tahoe on the right shoulder of northbound Interstate 35 near the overpass of Highway 8. After the vehicle was stopped and the Tahoe's flashing lights were activated, Ms. Gorz exited the vehicle on the rear passenger side and went to the rear of the Tahoe. Mr. Erickson and another passenger also exited the vehicle at the same time, but walked around the front of the Tahoe to the side of the road. Mr. Erickson heard a crash and observed an object flying through the air.

A pickup truck struck Ms. Gorz and the Tahoe and continued northbound for a short distance. The pickup truck then turned through the median and traveled southbound on Interstate 35.

Ms. Gorz was found lying on the fog line of northbound Interstate 35. She had suffered severe trauma and was deceased at the scene.

The following day, on December 15, 2003, Lucas Karl Lundeen and his attorney surrendered a 1995 black Ford F150 pickup to the Minnesota State Patrol. The Ford pickup had a broken passenger side mirror, right front-end damage and a crease on the side of the box. Sgt. Langer of the Minnesota State Patrol observed the paint transfer and damage to the Ford pickup was consistent with the evidence collected at the scene of the collision. Biological samples found on the Ford pickup were submitted to the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and later determined to match the DNA profile obtained from the known blood sample of Ms. Gorz.

For further information, please contact Doug Johnson or Susan Harris at the Washington County Attorney's Office, 651-430-6115.