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July 19, 2011

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Media Release

Update: Two Motorists Killed in Crash on Highway 50 Alternate

On Tuesday, July 19, 2011, at approximately 8:32 am, troopers from the Nevada Highway Patrol were dispatched to a motor vehicle collision on Highway 50 Alternate, just east of Farm District Road in Lyon County, approximately 8 miles east of Fernley. The details of the collision learned so far indicate that a grey 2008 Ford Sport Trac pickup with Texas license plates, occupied by two females, was parked on the right paved shoulder of the 4-lane highway where the posted speed limit is 65 miles per hour. It is unclear why the vehicle was stopped and parked on the paved shoulder. Also traveling east bound in the right lane approaching the area where the pickup was parked was a 1999 International 3-axle Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) truck. For reasons still to be determined and investigated, the big truck departed its travel lane and veered onto the right shoulder area and struck the rear of the pickup. The pickup was pushed into the dirt area adjacent to the roadway and remained on its wheels while the large truck continued to travel just off the right roadway edge and rolled over onto its right side.

One of the females was pronounced deceased at the scene who was later identified as Renee J. Upchurch, 53 of San Diego, Texas, while the other was airlifted from the crash scene to Renown Regional Medical Center in Reno via Care Flight. The NDOT employee, 61-year-old Leslie Brewer of Sparks, sustained injuries ranging from minor to moderate and was transported by ground ambulance to Renown. Our agency was notified this afternoon that the second female, identified as Esther Garza, 59, also from San Diego, Texas, succumbed to her injuries at approximately 9:56 am at the hospital. Family members of both victims were notified as quickly as possible.

During the course of the investigation, NDOT employee Leslie Brewer submitted to an alcohol and drug test. The results of both tests came back negative. The cause of the accident is still under investigation.

The Nevada Highway Patrol-Northern Command Major Accident Investigation Team (M.A.I.T.) is still conducting the investigation and witnesses, or anyone with additional information, is encouraged to call Trooper Mike Stapledon at (775) 689-4623, or the Department of Public Safety-Communications Center at (775) 687-0400 regarding case # NHP-1106130380.

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