



Cape May County Prosecutor's Office

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NEWS

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County Prosecutor

For Immediate Release – August 29, 2011

Cape May Court House, New Jersey - Cape May County Prosecutor Robert L. Taylor and Lower Township Police Chief Brian Marker announce the on-going investigation into the death of 40 year old James O'Neill. O'Neill was a resident of the 600 block of Wayne Avenue in North Cape May.

Earlier this date, at approximately 3:30am, Lower Township Police Department received a 911 call from a resident of Wayne Avenue who reported that James O'Neill was in the process breaking into a residence on the 600 block of Wayne Avenue. Police officers responded and observed James O'Neill with lacerations of the arms, a broken window and blood at the front of the property, consistent with evidence of an attempted burglary. Lower Township Rescue was also requested to respond due to the fact that O'Neill had previous police contacts for mental health related issues. Police apprehended O'Neil who physically resisted the initial responding officer's commands and attempts to restrain him. During the struggle, a private citizen assisted police in controlling O'Neill. O'Neill was eventually handcuffed. As rescue personnel were evaluating him, O'Neill lost consciousness and stopped breathing. Attempts were made to revive him by Lower Township Rescue while en route to the hospital. O'Neill was pronounced dead at Cape Regional Medical Center.

Subsequent investigation revealed that numerous prescription medications were found in the residence of O'Neill. An autopsy was conducted by the Southern Regional Medical Examiner's Office who determined that the cause and manner of death are pending toxicological testing.

O'Neill had numerous previous police contacts both in New Jersey and Delaware and had been arrested for Aggravated Assault on a Police Officer, Resisting Arrest and Terroristic Threats.

As per the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, the Division of Criminal Justice was notified of an In Custody Death and the on-going investigation is under the authority of the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office.

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