

Press Release

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Fatal Collision Following Pursuit.

On 08/21/2012 at about 2:08 am., a City of Hemet Police Officer spotted a vehicle in the 100 block of W. Oakland Ave., that matched the description of a vehicle involved in several shootings on August 19th, 2012. The officer initiated a traffic stop and the vehicle stopped in the 400 block of S. Alessandro St. Officers approached the vehicle and spoke to the three occupants. After a few minutes and without warning, the driver started the vehicle, placed it in drive and sped away, nearly striking one of the officers.

A pursuit was initiated and the suspect driver led officers on a high speed chase that went through portions of the north east and south east of Hemet. Ultimately the pursuit traveled west bound on Whittier Ave. from Stanford St., where the suspect vehicle reached speeds estimated to be in excess of 100 mph. The police units were unable to safely match the suspect's speed and dropped back. The suspect lost control of the vehicle in the 400 block of E. Whittier, nearly struck two bystanders, drove up the south curb of Whittier Ave., and struck a tree in the 100 block of E. Whittier Ave.

By the time the officers arrived, the vehicle was on fire and the officers began life saving measures and deployed portable fire extinguishers to help diminish / contain the fire until Fire Dept. personnel arrived on scene. The driver of the suspect vehicle was pronounced dead at the scene and both passengers were transported to area hospitals. One of the transported passengers succumbed to her injuries at the hospital and the other is in critical condition.

At the time of this release the investigation is ongoing and it is not known why the suspect fled. The names of the involved parties are being withheld pending notification of the next of kin.