



Ready to Protect,
Proud to Serve

NEWS RELEASE

Chris Magnus
Chief of Police

Contact: Pete Dugan
Sergeant / Public Information Office
520-791-4852
On-call PIO: tpdpi@tucsonaz.gov

Date: 04/24/2020
TDD: 791-2639

FATAL VEHICLE COLLISION EAST IRVINGTON ROAD AND SOUTH KOLB ROAD

The Tucson Police Department is investigating a fatal vehicle collision that occurred yesterday evening on Tucson’s East Side.

On April 23, 2020, at approximately 8:30 p.m., officers from Operations Division East, along with members of the Tucson Fire Department, were dispatched to the area of East Irvington Road and South Kolb Road for a report of a serious injury collision. Upon arrival, they located a single vehicle engulfed in flames just east of the intersection. The driver, 56-year-old Robert Helseth, was still inside of the vehicle. Tucson Fire was able to extinguish the flames; however, Mr. Helseth was sadly pronounced deceased on scene. Next of kin has been notified.

Traffic Detectives with the Tucson Police Department responded to continue the investigation. According to witness interviews conducted by officers and detectives, it was determined Mr. Helseth was traveling westbound on Irvington Road at a high rate of speed. As he approached Kolb Road, Mr. Helseth’s vehicle (2005 Jeep Wrangler) veered across the eastbound lanes of traffic and struck a sloped concrete barrier that separates the roadway from a wash that travels underneath Irvington Rd. Mr. Helseth was traveling at enough speed that when he hit the sloped barrier it caused his vehicle to become airborne and jump over the wash. When the vehicle landed, it began to roll end over end until it struck a power pole on the southeast corner of Irvington and Kolb. The vehicle immediately caught fire and Mr. Helseth was unable to exit.

Based on roadway evidence and witness statements, excessive speed appears to be a factor in the collision. It is unknown if Mr. Helseth passed away from injuries during the collision or from the fire. An autopsy will be conducted to determine the cause of death. There were no other vehicles involved in the collision.

Traffic Fatalities Year to Date:

For 2019 – 18	For 2020 – 25
Pedestrian – 9	Pedestrian – 8
Bicycle – 0	Bicycle – 1
Motorcycle – 5	Motorcycle – 6
Vehicle - 4	Vehicle – 10

Page 1 of 1

For accommodations; materials in accessible formats; foreign language interpreters; and/or materials in a language other than English, please contact the Tucson Police Department Public Information Office at (520) 791-4852 or (520) 791-2639 for TDD at least five (5) business days in advance. Para arreglos; materiales en formatos accesibles; interpretes de idioma extranjero; y/o materiales en otro idioma que no sea inglés, por favor comunicarse al Departamento de la Policía de Tucson a la sección de Información Pública al (520) 791-4852 o (520) 791-2639 para TDD por lo menos con cinco (5) días hábiles de anticipació.