



Richmond Police Department

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PRESS RELEASE - November 23rd, 2013:

OPERATOR CHARGED IN FATAL MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT ON HILLSDALE ROAD

On Friday, November 22nd, at approximately 7:39 PM, the Richmond Police Department received a 911-call regarding a rollover accident involving a single motor vehicle in the area of 112 Hillside Road. Officers arrived on scene moments later, and discovered that the overturned pickup truck had three (3) occupants. Two of the occupants suffered minor injuries, were alert and conscious, and had freed themselves from the vehicle. The third occupant was pinned beneath the overturned vehicle, and was un-responsive. That occupant was later pronounced dead at the scene. He was identified as **Nicholas Gershkoff**, age 20, of 69 Mesa Drive, North Kingstown.

Investigation revealed that the operator, **Zachary M. Thole**, age 20, of 8 Twilight Trail, Richmond, was driving south along Hillside Road with two passengers, including Mr. Gershkoff, and a 20-year-old female passenger from South Kingstown, when he lost control of his pickup truck and traveled off the right side of the roadway causing the vehicle to roll over. The 20-year-old female was transported to South County Hospital where she was treated for minor injuries and released. Her name is being withheld pending further investigation.

After the crash, Mr. Thole voluntarily submitted to blood tests at South County Hospital, and was subsequently arrested and charged with one felony count of **Driving Under the Influence of Liquor and/or Drugs - Death Resulting**, under § 31-27-2.2 of the Rhode Island General Laws. If convicted, the penalty includes a sentence minimum of five (5) years in jail and a maximum of fifteen (15) years in jail, fines ranging from \$5,000-\$10,000, and a five (5) year revocation of driver's license privileges. Mr. Thole was processed at the Richmond Police Station, and was arraigned before Justice-of-the-Peace Michael J. Robinson. Mr. Thole was held on \$100,000 surety bail, and was transported to the Intake Service Center at the ACI. He is scheduled to appear for bail review on Monday, November 25th, 2013, in 4th District Court in Wakefield.

The police investigation into the crash remains open and active.

END OF PRESS RELEASE