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**(Neb.)-Three Deaths Over Weekend In Dawes County**

By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 02/11/2013 08:41 AM

(Chadron)-The Dawes County Attorney/Coroner and emergency personnel responded to three separate and unrelated deaths over the weekend.

On Saturday evening, Chadron Police and the County Attorney were called to investigate the death of 18 year old Chadron State College student, Sterling Atkins of Broken Bow. Mr. Atkins lost consciousness while watching television with a friend and rescue efforts to revive him were unsuccessful. There is no evidence of drug or alcohol use and foul play is not suspected at this time. An autopsy has been scheduled for today (Monday) at 1:00 p.m., in Scottsbluff, as well as a significant number of medical lab tests to assist in determining the cause of death.

On Sunday morning, at approximately 9:30 a.m., the Dawes County Sheriff's Office and the County Attorney/Coroner were called to investigate the death of 48 year old Dave Hewitt of Whitney. Preliminary results lead investigators to believe that Mr. Hewitt died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Though foul play is not suspected, evidence found at the scene, and autopsy and toxicology results will continue to be examined in the on-going investigation. An autopsy is scheduled in Scottsbluff for Tuesday, February 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

While en route to the aforementioned call, the Dawes County Sheriff's Office and Dawes County Attorney/Coroner were contacted by dispatch to another unattended death. Sixty-four (64) year old Patrick Moore was found to be unresponsive at his home in rural Dawes County. Preliminary investigation results reveal that Mr. Moore suffered from a number of life threatening medical maladies and foul play is not suspected. Though the investigation into the cause of death continues, it is believed that Mr. Moore died of natural causes.

Further results of these on-going investigations will be released when determined to be available and appropriate.

(Information from Dawes County Attorney's Office)