



J. HANLEY

WINNEBAGO COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

PRESS RELEASE
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State's Attorney J. Hanley

Winnebago County State's Attorney J. Hanley announces that the Honorable Judge Debra Schafer sentenced **Todd G. Norton (DOB: 11/6/1970)** to 12 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections for Aggravated Driving Under the Influence of Drugs Resulting in Death and five years for Reckless Homicide. The defendant will be on Mandatory Supervised Release for two years after his release from prison. Norton was convicted of the offenses after a bench trial before Judge Schafer in November of 2024. The sentence for Aggravated Driving Under the Influence of Drugs Resulting in Death will be served at 85%. The sentences will be served concurrently.

On November 30, 2022, Rockford Police Officers responded to a traffic crash in the 800 Block of Brooke Road. Upon arrival, officers observed a red Chevrolet pickup truck, that had crashed into a pole. A male victim, later identified as Bernard Sawtelle, was trapped under the pickup truck. Sawtelle was transported to a hospital where he was pronounced deceased. The defendant, Todd Norton, was under the influence of drugs and driving at a high rate of speed when he struck Sawtelle.

Aggravated Driving Under the Influence of Drugs Resulting in Death is a Class 2 Felony that is punishable by a special sentence of 3-14 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections followed by two years of Mandatory Supervised Release.

Reckless Homicide is a Class 3 Felony that is punishable by a sentence of 2-5 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections followed by six months of Mandatory Supervised Release.

The Rockford Police Department conducted the investigation in this case. Assistant State's Attorneys Joseph Lesner and Emily Palmer handled the prosecution.

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