



Family sues over Huntley pileup that killed East Dubuque woman

By Josh Stockinger | Daily Herald Staff

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A wrongful-death lawsuit has been filed on behalf of an East Dubuque mother who was killed in a three-vehicle pileup in Huntley last fall.

Tabitha Carroll, 32, died of blunt head and neck trauma Oct. 31 when the truck she, her husband and their 3-year-old son were riding in was rear-ended by an 80,000-pound semitrailer truck driven by a Spring Grove man who, according to the Kane County Coroner's office, was under the influence of marijuana.

On Friday, Carroll's estate filed a lawsuit in Kane County Circuit Court against the semitrailer driver, Jeffrey Repec, and his employer, Geils Farms in Harvard. The lawsuit, which seeks more than \$50,000 in damages, comes less than a week after a coroner's jury ruled Carroll's death a homicide.

Assistant Kane County State's Attorney Clint Hull said Monday that authorities were still reviewing the case and no charges had been filed.

"We're working with Huntley police," Hull said. "We've retained an expert to look at some different issues, and we won't be able to make a final determination until we receive that report."

The crash happened as southbound traffic backed up on Route 47 near the Jane Addams Tollway. At an inquest, police testified that Repec was traveling about 50 mph in a semitrailer loaded with grain when he rear-ended a Ford F-150 pickup truck driven by Carroll's husband. The impact propelled the F-150 into an Illinois Department of Transportation truck in front of it, crushing the pickup and killing Carroll. Her husband and son were seriously injured.

In addition to the driver having traces of marijuana in his system, investigators said, five of 10 brakes on the semitrailer were "inadequate for stopping and out of alignment."

Neither Repec nor Geils Farms could not be reached for comment Monday.

"This is obviously very difficult for the family, especially the father with the loss of his wife and being separated from his child for a time while he was in the hospital," said attorney John J. Perconti, who represents the Carroll family. "They're still in mourning and obviously want to move forward and get some answers."

The lawsuit is scheduled to go before Judge Stephen Sullivan on April 17.