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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**Patrick Hoey  
Assistant Deputy Chief of Police**

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**DATE : November 3, 2015**

**Phone: (815) 987-5822**

### **ARREST RELEASE**

On 11-03-2015 at around 1:00 am officers of the Rockford Police Department responded to the area of N. Central Ave. and Kilburn Ave. in reference to a traffic crash. Upon arrival officers located the scene of a single vehicle roll-over crash and found two occupants inside the vehicle, later identified as a 2005 Chevrolet Tahoe.

Rockford Fire Department rescue personnel and paramedics responded for extrication. Paramedics pronounced one occupant, a 42 year old Rockford man dead at the scene. The name of the victim is being withheld until family members are notified.

The driver, 39 year old Christopher D. Smith of Rockford had minor injuries and was transported to a local hospital, was treated and released.

A loaded handgun was located inside the Tahoe while extrication was being conducted.

Rockford Police Department Traffic Detectives responded and reconstructed the scene. Preliminary indications were that high speeds (in excess of 90 MPH) resulted in the driver losing control of the Tahoe at a bend in the roadway. The vehicle left the roadway, rolled over and struck a large tree.

This same Tahoe had fled from a traffic stop approximately five minutes prior at the intersection of School Street and N. Central Ave. Rockford Police M3 officers attempted to stop the Tahoe for a registration violation. The Tahoe fled as soon as the M3 officers turned on their emergency lights. The officer immediately turned off their emergency lights once the Tahoe fled and they did not pursue. The officers last saw the Tahoe travel north bound through the intersection of N. Central Av and Auburn Street against the red light. The officers lost sight of the Tahoe when they were stopped in traffic at the red light. Witnesses later called in the accident after they witnessed the vehicle leave the roadway.



The investigation was reviewed by the Winnebago County State's Attorney's Office and the following charges have been filed against Christopher Smith:

Armed Habitual Criminal (2 Counts) (Class X Felony)  
Unlawful Possession of a Firearm by a Street Gang Member. (Class X Felony)  
Unlawful Possession of a Weapon by a Felon. (2 Counts) (Class X Felony)  
Aggravated Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol (Class 2 Felony)  
Reckless Homicide (Class 3 Felony)  
Aggravated Fleeing to Elude (3 Counts) (Class 3 Felony)  
Driving after Revocation  
No Insurance  
Several other Traffic related offenses

Smith was lodged in the Winnebago County Criminal Justice Center.

The charges against Smith are accusations and he is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

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