



DAVID J. THOMAS
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
Jefferson and Gilpin Counties

For Immediate Release – November 30, 2004

Contact: Pam Russell
Public Information
303-271-6905

RE: District Attorney Finds Law Enforcement Use of Force Justified in
Death of Jason Purcell

District Attorney Dave Thomas announced today that his office has determined that Edgewater and Mountain View Police Officers were justified under Colorado Revised Statutes in the use of force that resulted in the death of Jason Rodney Purcell (DOB: 11-23-78) on October 27, 2004.

Purcell was driving in the area of 39th Avenue and Sheridan, without head or tail lights, at around 11:20 p.m. when a Mountain View Police Officer attempted to pull him over. He refused to pull over and several other police officers joined the attempt to contact him. He continued to elude police and ultimately ran a red light, crashing into a car driven by civilians, and twice driving head-on towards police officers while in their cars.

Once his vehicle had crashed, the four officers involved told Purcell to show his hands and get out of his truck. He failed to comply with their commands and appeared to be trying to get something from behind the passenger seat, ducking and leaning sideways, out of view. All of the officers believed that he was attempting to get something from the back of the passenger compartment of the truck, possibly a weapon. He then “slammed”

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the truck into gear and “lurched” directly at one of the officers who was in his vehicle only 12 feet away. Shots were fired by three officers, killing Purcell.

This shooting, as all officer-involved shootings in this jurisdiction, was investigated by the First Judicial District Critical Incident Response Team and its results were presented to the District Attorney’s Office for a determination as to whether or not the use of force was justified.

District Attorney Thomas found that, “The use of force against the officers by Purcell appeared imminent, and no lesser degree of force by the officers would seem appropriate.”

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