



# BCPO News

**Scott A. Coffina, Prosecutor**

**Philip S. Aronow**  
*First Assistant Prosecutor*

**Darren N. Anderson**  
*Chief of Detectives*



---

## **CONTACT:**

Prosecutor Scott Coffina  
609-265-5034

**October 25, 2019**

## **Elizabeth Man Receives 10 Years in Prison for Drunken Crash that Killed Daughter**

Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina announced that an Elizabeth man was sentenced today to 10 years in New Jersey state prison for driving impaired and causing the death of his daughter during a crash on Interstate 295 in Mount Laurel late last year.

The sentence was handed down in Superior Court by the Hon. Gerard H. Breland, J.S.C. Marcelo Rizzo, 38, pled guilty in August to one count of Vehicular Homicide (Second Degree), one count of Endangering the Welfare of a Child (Second Degree), and Driving While Intoxicated.

The investigation began on November 25, 2018, when State Troopers were detailed to I-295 North just after 6 p.m. for a report of a motor vehicle accident. Upon arrival, they discovered Rizzo's Ford Focus in the grass beyond the right shoulder. His 9-year-old daughter had been ejected from the vehicle into a wooded area and sustained fatal injuries. A younger daughter who was also in the vehicle was injured in the crash as well.

The investigation revealed that Rizzo had been weaving through traffic and struck another vehicle before veering off the road. Further investigation revealed that Rizzo had consumed multiple alcoholic drinks at an establishment in Camden County prior to the crash. Toxicology tests conducted on blood drawn from Rizzo following the crash indicated his blood alcohol level was 0.16.

"This tragedy was completely preventable, and therefore, inexcusable," Prosecutor Coffina said. "Between ridesharing services, traditional taxis, designated drivers, or, most elementally, refraining from drinking before having to drive somewhere, the defendant had many options to get his family home safely. Instead, he chose to get behind the wheel and as a result, one of his children was killed."

Rizzo was prosecuted by Assistant Prosecutor Joshua Dennis, supervisor of the BCPO Collision Analysis and Reconstruction Unit. The investigation was conducted by the New Jersey State Police.

**END**

**2019-111**