



BCPO News

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Delanco Man Pleads Guilty in 2018 Willingboro Double Fatal Collision

Burlington County Prosecutor Scott Coffina announced that a Delanco man pled guilty today in Superior Court to causing the deaths of a married couple during a collision early last year in the jug handle at Route 130 northbound and Bridgeboro Road in Willingboro Township.

Under an agreement with the Prosecutor's Office, Amish Patel, 31, of Delanco, pled guilty to two counts of Vehicular Homicide (Second Degree) and Driving While Intoxicated for the deaths of Robert Stephens, 52, and his wife Janet, 50, of Burlington Township, on January 13, 2018.

According to the plea agreement, Patel will be sentenced to 12 ½ years in New Jersey state prison. Under the No Early Release Act, Patel must serve at least 85 percent of the sentence before becoming eligible for parole. The Hon. Philip E. Haines, J.S.C., scheduled sentencing for January 16, 2020.

Patel acknowledged before Judge Haines that he had been drinking and at the time of the accident was travelling at more than double the posted speed limit, which is 50 miles per hour along that stretch of Route 130.

The investigation revealed that at approximately 4:30 p.m., the Stephens' minivan was stopped in the jug handle waiting to cross Route 130 onto Bridgeboro Road when Patel, who was traveling northbound on Route 130, lost control of his BMW 440, entered the jug handle and crashed into the minivan.

The force of the impact propelled the minivan over the guardrail and down an embankment, where it submerged into a body of water that is part of Olympia Lakes. Autopsies revealed that both victims had drowned.

Patel is being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecutor Josh Dennis, supervisor of the BCPO Collision Analysis and Reconstruction Unit, and Assistant Prosecutors Douglas J. Bligh and Brandon Almeida. The collision was investigated by the Prosecutor's Office and the Willingboro Township Police Department. Assistance was provided at the scene by the Delran Township Police Department, Edgewater Park Township Police Department and the New Jersey State Police. The lead investigators were BCPO Detective Michael Reagan and Willingboro Township Police Detective Ed Walker.

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