



OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
TODD SPITZER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

Date: December 23, 2022

Kimberly Edds

Case #: 22NF3267

Director of Public Affairs

Office: 714-347-8405, Cell: 714-504-1917

media@da.ocgov.com

19-year-old Charged with Crashing Ford F-350 into Tree at 100 mph while Intoxicated, Killing 20-year-old Man in Yorba Linda

SANTA ANA, Calif. — A 19-year-old man has been charged with killing his friend after crashing his pickup truck into a tree while driving intoxicated at 100 miles an hour in Yorba Linda Friday night. He has also been charged with illegally carrying a concealed loaded firearm.

Noah Christopher Cooper Watson, 19, of Yorba Linda, has been charged with one felony count of vehicular manslaughter with gross negligence while intoxicated and one felony count of carrying a concealed loaded unregistered firearm in a vehicle.

He faces a maximum sentence of 10 years and eight months in state prison if convicted.

On Friday, December 16, 2022, at approximately 10:51 p.m., Watson is accused of driving his Ford F-350 at 100 miles per hour when he crashed into the center median and into a large eucalyptus tree on Yorba Ranch Road south of Via Sepulveda in Yorba Linda. The posted speed limit is 40 miles per hour.

Watson's passenger, 20-year-old Hunter Shekels, was killed in the collision.

Deputies with the Orange County Sheriff's Department found a loaded, unregistered firearm under the driver's seat of Watson's pickup truck.

Watson was taken to the hospital to be treated for his injuries. He is scheduled to be arraigned on January 26, 2023 at the North Justice Center in Department N3. He was released from custody after posting \$100,000 bail.

"This is yet another tragic loss of life because someone made a terrible decision to drink and get behind the wheel of a vehicle," said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. "Hunter's family should be preparing to celebrate the holidays and instead they are planning his funeral. This is completely unacceptable to me – and it should be unacceptable to every resident of Orange County. If you are under the influence, do not drive. It's not worth your life or the life of someone you love."

Deputy District Attorney Brian Orue of the Homicide Unit is prosecuting this case.

###