



Woman in U.S. illegally is arrested in DUI crash that killed Noblesville man

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A woman who investigators believe has been living in the country illegally was arrested early Monday after an alcohol-fueled crash left a 66-year-old Noblesville man dead.

Elizabeth Vargas-Hernandez, 35, has been booked into the Marion County Jail on charges of operating a vehicle while intoxicated causing death and knowingly or intentionally operating a motor vehicle without ever receiving a license.

In addition to the charges she faces in Marion County, jail records indicate that she also is being detained on behalf of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Jail records say she is originally from Mexico.

The crash was reported shortly before 2:30 a.m. on I-465 near Michigan Road on the northwest side, according to the Indiana State Police. Police found two inverted vehicles. One vehicle was on the right shoulder of the interstate, and the other was in the ditch.

The driver of the vehicle in the ditch, 66-year-old David Kriehn, was ejected from his car as it rolled several times. He was rushed to St. Vincent Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Vargas-Hernandez, who was driving an SUV, was unhurt. There were three passengers with her in the SUV who were checked and released by medics at the scene, police said.

Vargas-Hernandez struck the back of Kriehn's vehicle, causing it to slide off the road and overturn several times before resting in the ditch, police said. The SUV also overturned and came to rest upside down on the right shoulder.

Court documents say troopers at the scene smelled alcohol on the breath of Vargas-Hernandez after the crash. Her eyes appeared to be watery and bloodshot, and she did not have a driver's license.

When asked how much she had to drink, Vargas-Hernandez said "just a little bit," court documents said. A preliminary breath test administered at the scene indicated that she had a blood-alcohol level of 0.11 percent, court documents said. The legal limit in Indiana at which a driver is presumed intoxicated is 0.08 percent.

As the trooper drove Vargas-Hernandez to Eskenazi Hospital to conduct a blood draw, she said that she has been living in the United States illegally for about four years and that is the reason she did not have identification, court documents said.

The Migration Policy Institute has estimated that about 820,000 of the 11 million illegal immigrants living in the country have criminal convictions. Research cited by the Cato Institute and the American Immigration Council indicates that immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than people born in the United States.

A jury trial for Vargas-Hernandez's case has been set for May.