

Drunk Driver Rolls Over, Strikes Massachusetts State Police cruisers in Chicopee, one with K9 inside

Two Massachusetts State Troopers were outside their cruisers on Route 91 northbound in Chicopee, conducting an investigation of a suspected drug suspect, when a drunk driver slammed into both cruisers shortly after midnight today.

The Troopers, who were investigating occupants of a car that one of them had stopped a short time earlier, were on foot and not injured. A Massachusetts State Police dog was in one of the cruisers and was transported to a veterinary hospital for an examination.

Investigation indicates that the impaired driver was driving on Route 91 northbound and lost control of his 2020 Subaru Forester. After being involved in a collision with another vehicle in the middle lane, the Forester, which was registered in Connecticut, began rolling over as it careened toward the two MSP Ford Explorer Interceptors parked in the breakdown lane.



Massachusetts State Police photo.

The rolling Forester first struck the left driver and passenger doors of the MSP K9 cruiser, then continued to roll approximately 20 more feet, where it crashed into the rear of, and came to rest up against, the patrol trooper's cruiser. At the time of the crash, two men who had been in the car that was initially stopped were sitting in the rear of the patrol cruiser, having just been evaluated by the Troopers.

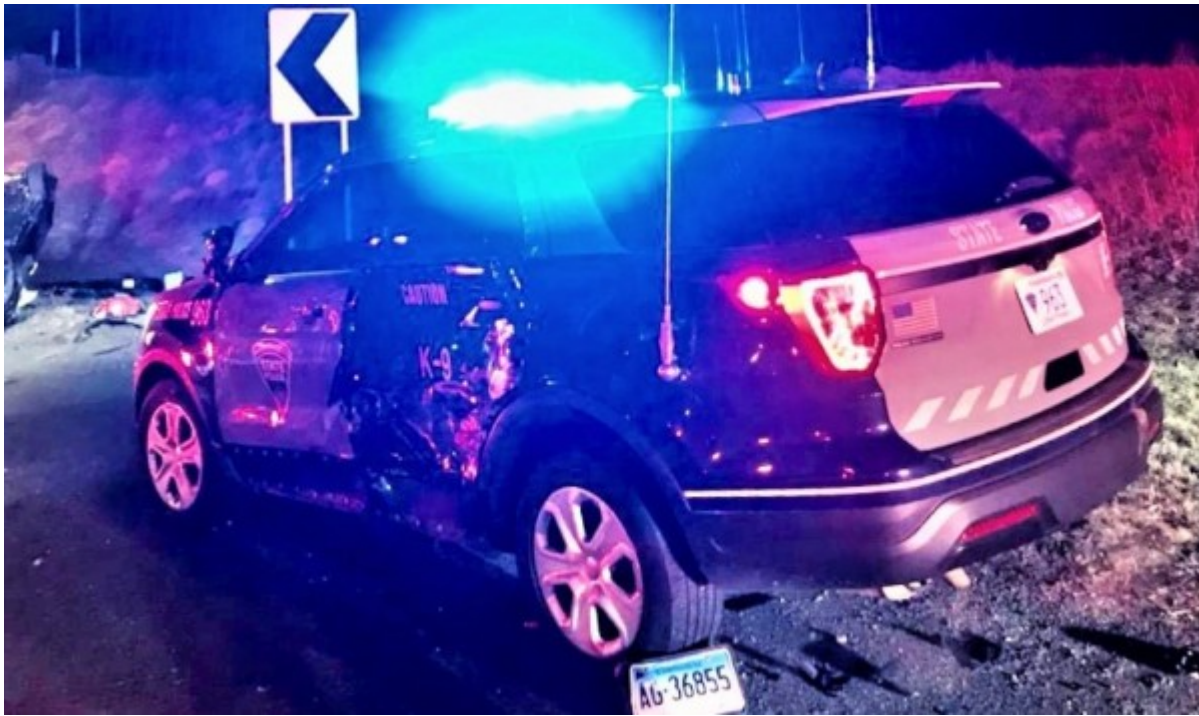
After the crash, Trooper Patrick Dolan, who is assigned to State Police-Springfield and conducted the initial motor

vehicle stop, and Trooper Gregory Valentine, assigned to the State Police K9 Section and who responded to assist with the stop, checked the conditions of the male driver of the Forester, the two men in the rear of the patrol cruiser, and MSP K9 Kyber, who was in the K9 cruiser when it was hit. None of the motorists were injured; Kyber was distressed by the impact of the crash and was taken to a veterinary hospital, where he was determined to have suffered no serious injuries.

The other vehicle that was in the middle lane when it was struck by the Forester did not stop and continued to drive northbound on Route 91. That vehicle's description was broadcast to area MSP barracks and local police departments but was not located.

Numerous other Troopers responded to the crash scene. The operator of the Forester was identified as RYAN CHURILLO, 29, of East Windsor, Ct. Troopers observed an odor of alcohol on Forester while speaking to him and asked him to submit to standardized field sobriety tests. CHURILLO partially completed the field sobriety tests before refusing to finish them.

Troopers located an empty bottle of white wine on the ground outside CHURILLO's rolled over vehicle, and another partially-consumed bottle of white in inside the car. As a result of the totality of the evidence, including Troopers' observations, CHURILLO's statements and performance on the partial field sobriety tests, and the discovery of the wine bottles, Troopers arrested CHURILLO for operating under the influence of alcohol and reckless operation of a motor vehicle.



Massachusetts State Police photo.

Troopers transported CHURILO to State Police-Springfield, where he refused to submit to a breath-alcohol test, which triggers an automatic driver's license suspension. He was booked on the charges; a bail clerk set bail at \$500 plus the standard \$40 clerk fee. CHURILO posted bail and was released to a family member. He was issued a summons to appear in Springfield District Court for arraignment, which will most likely be scheduled by the court for early next week.

Meanwhile, one of the men in the car that was initially stopped by Trooper Dolan was found to be the subject of three outstanding warrants and in possession of powder cocaine concealed in a folded dollar bill. That man, FELIX J. ESCOBAR, 41, of Springfield, was placed under arrest and transported to State Police-Springfield. He was booked on the three warrants, all issued from Springfield District Court, and for possession of cocaine. After a medical evaluation, he was taken to the Hampden County House of Correction and held without bail on the warrants until court next week. ESCOBAR was also cited for a seatbelt violation.

ESCOBAR was a passenger in the Mazda that Trooper Dolan observed committing a marked lanes violation on Route 91

northbound at 12:02 a.m. Trooper Dolan stopped the Mazda adjacent to Exit 12, and spoke to the occupants. Trooper Dolan determined the driver, a 42-year-old Springfield man, was not impaired but issued him a citation for a marked lanes violation. The Trooper also noticed that passenger ESCOBAR was not wearing a seatbelt and asked for his information. ESCOBAR initially provided a name Trooper Dolan determined to be fake; ESCOBAR then provided his correct name and information.

After Trooper Dolan found powder cocaine inside a folded dollar bill that ESCOBAR was holding, and after reviewing the criminal histories of the two men, and considering the false information initially provided, Trooper Dolan requested an MSP K9 unit to respond to the scene of the stop to help search the car. The Mazda occupants were placed in rear of Trooper Dolan's cruiser. Trooper Valentine and Kyber responded to assist in the investigation.

A few moments later, as the Troopers were outside their cruisers performing their investigation, as Kyber was still in the K9 cruiser, and as ESCOBAR and the other occupant of the Mazda were in the back of the patrol cruiser, CHURILLO approached driving northbound, in his car, lost control, and struck the cruisers.

The investigation into the crash was undertaken by the Troop B patrol supervisor, with the assistance of other Troop B personnel and the State Police Crime Scene Services Section. The scene was cleared at 2:29 a.m.

Please credit photos to Massachusetts State Police. Top photo below shows rolled over Forester up against rear of patrol cruiser. Bottom photo shows damaged K9 cruiser.