

CITY OF RALEIGH INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM



To: J. Russell Allen,
City Manager

From: Cassandra Deck-Brown,
Police Chief

Date: April 17, 2013

Re: Preliminary Report of April 10, 2013,
In-custody Death

The City of Raleigh Police Department experienced an in-custody death in the early morning hours of April 10, 2013, in the 500 block of Mial Street. City policy requires that the Police Department issue a report within five working days of any such incident. As noted below, investigations concerning this incident are ongoing and the information provided herein is preliminary in nature.

In the early morning hours of April 10, 2013, police were dispatched to investigate multiple calls of a disturbance near the 500 block of Mial Street. Callers described a naked man, running around screaming profanity at the top of his lungs and pounding on the top of his car. There was also a report of a woman screaming.

Officer M.A. Ford was dispatched to investigate. When Officer Ford arrived, he observed an individual, later identified as Thomas Jeffrey Sadler, 45, naked in front of his house. Mr. Sadler was approximately six feet two inches tall and weighed between 250 and 300 pounds. Although he initially complied with instructions to sit down, Mr. Sadler had difficulty expressing himself when talking to Officer Ford. As Officer Ford was asking Mr. Sadler if he needed any assistance, Officer S.M. Archambault arrived on the scene.

As both officers were speaking to Mr. Sadler, his demeanor suddenly changed. He began to utter profanity and said either, "I'm going to kill you," or, "You're going to have to kill me." Mr. Sadler leapt to his feet as he spoke and began to charge toward Officer Ford with his fists clenched and held out in front of his face.

Officer Ford began to run backwards away from Mr. Sadler. Believing that his safety was in danger, Officer Ford drew his TASER[®] as he ran and discharged it at Mr. Sadler, who then fell to the ground. Officer Archambault attempted to secure Mr. Sadler's arm behind his back but was bucked off of Mr. Sadler, who was still actively resisting, despite repeated verbal commands to place his hands behind his back. Officer Archambault tried again to gain control of Mr. Sadler but was having difficulty because of his size and strength. Additionally, the fact that Mr. Sadler

was sweating profusely made it difficult for Officer Archambault to maintain a grip of Mr. Sadler's arm. Officer Ford reactivated his TASER[®] and Officer Archambault again attempted to handcuff Mr. Sadler, who again resisted. This sequence continued several times until Officer Archambault was able to handcuff Mr. Sadler. Once Mr. Sadler was secured, Officer Ford requested EMS to respond in reference to the TASER[®] deployment.

Although handcuffed, Mr. Sadler continued to resist by thrashing around and growling while he was on the ground. Mr. Sadler suddenly stopped thrashing and grew quiet. Officers immediately checked him and determined that he had stopped breathing and did not have a pulse. One officer began chest compressions and another informed Emergency Communications that the suspect was no longer conscious and breathing and requested an emergency response for medical assistance.

EMS arrived on the scene and provided medical assistance but was unable to revive Mr. Sadler, who was pronounced deceased at the scene.

At around the time of the 911 calls that initiated the initial encounter with Mr. Sadler, he had violently assaulted a minor who lived in Mr. Sadler's household. The minor was able to flee the house and seek assistance from the resident at a nearby house who called 911 to report the assault. The juvenile was later transported for treatment of the injuries he received as a result of Mr. Sadler's assault.

In accordance with normal procedure in these matters, the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) is conducting a criminal investigation of the in-custody death and will present the completed investigation to Wake County District Attorney Colon Willoughby for review. The Internal Affairs Unit of the Raleigh Police Department is conducting an administrative investigation into this matter. When complete, the administrative investigation will be reviewed by supervisory staff in accordance with established practices. The detective division is investigating the crimes committed by the suspect who died. All investigations are ongoing. Pursuant to departmental policy, Officer M.A. Ford was placed on administrative duty pending the completion of the SBI and administrative investigations.