Redmond Woman Critically Injured in Deschutes Market Road Crash

by Richard Burton

A Redmond woman was critically injured in a near head-on crash Tuesday night when her car drifted over the centerline of Deschutes Market Road and was hit by a van, leaving her unconscious and trapped in her vehicle, said authorities.

Deschutes County Sheriffâ€™s deputies, Bend Police, and Bend Fire emergency medical technicians responded to the scene on Deschutes Market Road, just north of Dale Road, about 8:15 p.m. October 24 to find Melissa Renee Kruse, 32, unconscious and trapped in her Chevy Malibu sedan.

According to a news release by Sgt. Dan Swearingen and Deputy Randy Zilk, deputies administered aid until fire medics arrived and used the jaws-of-life to extricate the victim. Airlife was requested due to the serious nature of Kruseâ€™s injuries, but the helicopter was unable to land because of overhead power lines and the absence of a suitable nearby landing zone. She was transported to St. Charles Medical Center by ground ambulance in critical condition

The driver of the Toyota Sienna van, 55-year old Greg Mathew Minerich of Bend, was also taken to the hospital with minor injuries.

Investigators have yet to determine why Kruse, who was traveling south on Deschutes Market Road, drifted over the centerline approximately 3 feet directly into the path of the van. Minerich was unsuccessful in his attempt to avoid the collision, and both vehicles received extensive damage, said the news release.

Alcohol was not a factor in the crash, both drivers were wearing seatbelts, and both airbags deployed in Minerichâ€™s vehicle, Swearingen and Zilk added. The investigation is ongoing.