

3 killed, 4 injured in Highway 26 head-on crash

by Cheryl McDermott

Police are continuing an investigation to determine the cause of a head-on crash that killed three people and injured four others, one critically, on Highway 26 east of Elsie, Oregon on Sunday afternoon.

Three passengers of this Volkswagen Jetta were killed, and another critically injured in a head-on crash on Hwy. 26 near Elsie, OR. [OSP photo](#) Both the driver and passenger in the pickup, struck head-on by the Jetta after it crossed the centerline, were injured. [OSP photo](#) According to an Oregon State Police (OSP) news release, Florencio Martinez-Butron, 22, of Gardena, California, was driving the vehicle that, for unknown reasons, crossed the centerline of Highway 26 near milepost 25 about 3:45 p.m., January 20 and struck an oncoming pickup.

Martinez-Butron was transported to Legacy Emanuel Hospital (LEH) in Portland with reportedly minor injuries, but three passengers in his 1999 Volkswagen Jetta were pronounced dead at the scene, and another was critically injured, troopers said.

The deceased were identified as 17-year-old Beaverton resident Liz A. Mateo-Gomez, 23-year old Roxana M. Chavez of Tigard, and a 23-year old California woman whose name has not yet been released. Mateo-Gomez and Chavez were students of the Tongue Point Job Corps Center in Astoria, OSP stated.

Miguel Angel Martinez-Burton, 21, the left-rear passenger in the Jetta, was flown by a LifeFlight helicopter to LEH for treatment of critical injuries sustained in the crash.

The driver of the Chevrolet Silverado pickup, Walter E. Remmers, Jr., 53, and his passenger, 34-year old Jamie M. Dallas, both Portland residents, were also transported to LEH. Troopers said Remmers received minor injuries, and Dallas received non-life threatening injuries.

Neither Chavez, passenger Miguel Angel Martinez-Butron, or the unidentified deceased woman were wearing seat belts, troopers said.

OSP troopers with the Astoria Area Command office are continuing the investigation, and were assisted on scene by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) personnel and the Elsie-Vinemaple Fire Department. ODOT established a detour around the accident scene, and the highway was reopened to traffic about six hours later.

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