



Ready to Protect,  
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## NEWS RELEASE

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### FATAL VEHICLE COLLISION 5700 BLOCK OF EAST 28<sup>TH</sup> STREET

On March 24, 2022, just after 6:30 a.m., officers from the East Side Division were dispatched to a report of a white Chevy Astro van that collided into a wall and palm tree. Upon arrival, Tucson Fire personnel were on scene rendering aid to the driver of the van – identified as an adult female. She was ultimately transported to St. Joseph’s Hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. As patrol officers were concluding their initial investigation, they were notified that the driver’s condition had rapidly declined while at the hospital.

Interviews conducted by officers at the scene in conjunction with roadway evidence determined that the driver of the van was traveling eastbound on 28<sup>th</sup> Street when her vehicle abruptly drove south – off the roadway – striking several garbage cans. The van then suddenly accelerated in a northeastern direction, striking a block wall and palm tree. A DUI Officer responded to the hospital and determined that the driver of the van was not impaired at the time of the collision. Traffic Investigators believe a medical issue could have played a role in the collision. The Office of the Medical Examiner later contacted the Tucson Police Department and notified detectives that the driver had passed away at the hospital. The driver was identified as 51-year-old **Joann Ester Heitzman**. Next of kin has been notified.

#### Fatalities Year to Date:

<b>For 2021 - 16</b>	<b>For 2022 - 27</b>
Pedestrian - 9	Pedestrian- 12
Bicycle - 1	Bicycle - 1
Motorcycle - 3	Motorcycle - 5
Vehicle - 3	Vehicle - 9

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