

One Wisconsin Now: Schimel's Department of Justice claims 'Nothing unusual' in story on state crime lab delay that may have kept dangerous driver involved in fatal hit and run on the road

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Tragic Consequences as Turnaround Time for Tests at State Crime Lab Grow Longer

MADISON, Wis. — [An Associated Press story](#) details a case in which a wait for test results from the state crime lab, overseen by Attorney General Brad Schimel at the state Department of Justice, may have contributed to a repeat drunken driver remaining out on the street, and subsequently causing a fatal accident. In responding to questions about the delay, a DOJ spokesperson declared, “There is nothing unusual about this case ...”

“A dangerous repeat drunken driver was still on the road at least in part because of the turnaround time at the state crime lab,” commented One Wisconsin Now Executive Director Scot Ross. “That Schimel’s office would even suggest this is anything other than tragic, much less dismiss it as ‘nothing unusual’ is shocking and appalling.”

As reported by the news service:

“Prosecutors were waiting for the state crime lab to complete blood tests on a repeat drunken driver this summer when he struck and killed a man changing a flat tire along the interstate.

Results of the blood work could have kept Frank Schiller behind bars, canceling his bail and preventing the fatal accident, a liberal advocacy group charges. The test results were sent to prosecutors on July 11, three days after the crash and more than three months after they were submitted to the crime lab for processing ... on July 8, Schiller was heading east on Interstate 94 near Delafield when he tried to pass other cars on the shoulder and struck Enns, who had stopped to help another driver change a flat tire, according to court records. Prosecutors leveled a host of charges against him on July 13, including homicide by intoxicated use of a vehicle.”

The story goes on to note that:

“According to DOJ’s website, the average turnaround time in 2014 for blood and other bodily fluid tests was 32 days in 2014. By 2016, Schimel’s second year in office, the average turnaround time had risen to 52 days. Koremenos said so far this year the crime lab’s toxicology unit’s average turnaround time is 56 days.”

Ross concluded, “This is an unacceptable situation that, as we saw in this case, can have tragic consequences. It needs to be addressed and fixed instead of passed off as nothing out of the ordinary.”

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One Wisconsin Now is a statewide communications network specializing in effective earned media and online organizing to advance progressive leadership and values.