

Man sentenced after guilty plea for Aggravated DUI resulting in death

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EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County State's Attorney Tom Gibbons announced that a Maryville man was sentenced to seven years in prison for a 2015 fatal motor vehicle accident on Northbound I-55 in Madison County.

Steven L. Willis (d.o.b. 07/02/77) pleaded guilty to one count of Aggravated DUI Resulting in Death on March 15th.

At 8 p.m. on October 22, 2015, the Illinois State Police were dispatched to the fatal accident that occurred at Mile Marker 16.0 on Northbound I-55. Samantha S. Miller, 27, was killed when Willis's 2014 Chevrolet truck struck and killed her. Investigators

believe that Miller had pulled over to the side of the road when her vehicle, a Mitsubishi, had broken down. Miller, who was with her three children, was pronounced dead at the scene of the accident.

Assistant State's Attorney Crystal Uhe, Chief of the Criminal Division, argued in support of a 14 year sentence this afternoon in front of Associate Judge Neil Schroeder, who sentenced Willis to 7 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Maximum penalty for a Class 2 felony is 3-14 years in prison. Willis will be required to serve 85 percent of his sentence.

"This was a terrible tragedy for the victim, her three young children, her family, and loved ones. I ask everyone to continue to pray for and support this family. Although this defendant's prison sentence will eventually come to an end, these children have a life sentence of suffering and the loss of a mother's love and care. I just hope and pray that we can provide some measure of healing for them by bringing this defendant to justice and putting him behind bars," said State's Attorney Gibbons.

Gibbons reminded the public that "despite decades of work to end the devastating effects of driving under the influence, this defendant's horrible choices on that night and tragic results remind us that there is still work to be done. Instead of making that fateful choice to drive under the influence, please use a designated driver, call a cab, or to use an app to get a driver to take you home. Please drive safe and save a life."

Gibbons also thanked his prosecutors, and those individuals who responded to the crash scene including the Illinois State Police, the Coroner's Office and emergency medical personnel.