

Cold Case Since 2004: DNA Breakthrough Leads To Arrest In Alton Woman's Murder

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MARYLAND HEIGHTS - DNA breakthroughs are solving many cold cases throughout the nation in this day and age. On Wednesday, a DNA discovery led to charges of a then Maryland Heights man - Mike A. Clardy - with the 2004 cold case murder of an Alton woman, Deanna Denise Howland.



Clardy, 63, faces second-degree murder and abandonment of a corpse charges in the case, which started in June 2004. On Tuesday, Clardy admitted to the murder at his 2004 residence in St. Ann, Mo. The deceased Howland's identity was not known for many years. Howland, then of Alton, was 35 years old at the time of death and was a mother with four children.

Howland's body was attacked in a gruesome fashion and her dismembered remains were discovered two days after her death at an Interstate 70 rest stop.

Investigators linked Clardy as a suspect by a match of DNA fragments left on Howland and a knife that was discovered at the scene.

The Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis was an investigator in this case. Representatives of the Major Case Squad investigated the case and said they will release more information at a press conference Thursday afternoon in Warren County. Clardy has no previous criminal charges in the state of Missouri. The press conference starts at 3 p.m. at the Warren County Administration Building in Warrenton.

Clardy's bond was set at \$1 million with cash only.