

Man Identified In Fatal Fire In East Alton

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EAST ALTON - The name of the person who died in the storage unit Tuesday in East Alton has been released and also a Carrollton woman is being held and accused of providing false and conflicting information to those investigating the situation.

The Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis has been called to investigate and the man who died has been identified as James A. Huch, listed as homeless, but from the Alton area. He appears to have died as a result of an accidental fire, Major Case Squad investigators have discovered.

The man's death is not believed to be a criminal act. However, one person - Paula M. Vinyard, 68, of Carrollton has been charged with obstructing justice in the case.

East Alton Fire crews got the call about the fire around 1:25 a.m. Tuesday in the 600 block of West St. Louis Avenue. It took firefighters nearly an hour to put the fire out and when the person was found deceased in the storage unit, the investigation began.

The Major Case Squad will likely deactivate today once it is fully decided the death was accidental with no criminal circumstances.