



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

PRESS RELEASE

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PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL SAVE LIFE WITH NARCAN AT ATHENS LODGE

ATHENS, TENNESSEE – August 5, 2019 – On August 5, 2019, at about 2:00 am, the Athens Police Department was dispatched to a room at the Athens Lodge, in reference to a medical emergency.

Athens Police Officers Jalen Smith and Beau Swafford responded to the scene, and were joined by off-duty firefighter Mike Eaton, who was driving on the interstate nearby when he heard the call on the radio. The officers and firefighter entered the room and found a 29-year old man unconscious on the floor of the bathroom. Based on his symptoms and information obtained at the scene, they determined that he was likely suffering from an opioid overdose. In addition to other first aid procedures, they administered several doses of Narcan to the subject. An on-duty crew of Athens Firefighters also arrived on scene and performed first aid on the man.

The subject came to and was eventually transported to Starr Regional Medical Center when EMS arrived on scene. Athens Police Officers were recently trained and equipped to administer Narcan, due to the spreading opioid crisis in the United States.

In situations such as this, officers typically conduct an investigation to determine where the illegal substances were obtained from. Such an investigation is being conducted now, but the individuals involved have thus far been uncooperative.

Chief Couch, of the Athens Police Department, said “These young public safety officials did a phenomenal job of keeping their wits about them and saving a life. I’m proud of them. The Athens Police and Fire Departments spend a great deal of resources responding to an inordinate amount of calls at this location. Many of these calls are drug related, and this no doubt contributes to a great deal of the crime and quality of life issues in Athens. I hope that the management and owners of this establishment will consider the effect the Athens Lodge is having on the citizens of Athens and take action to rectify the issues there.”

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