



# Georgetown County Sheriff's Office

*A. Lane Cribb, Sheriff*

430 North Fraser Street

Georgetown, South Carolina 29440

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## *News Release*

Contact: Sergeant Neil Johnson, Public Affairs Officer, (843) 436-6049

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For Immediate Release

March 10, 2009

### **No Charges Filed in the February 24<sup>th</sup> Death Investigation**

(Georgetown, SC)---Georgetown County Sheriff's Investigators have met with the Georgetown County Solicitor's Office and reviewed all evidence associated with the death of 42-year-old James Vernon Wells of International Drive, Georgetown. After conversing with the solicitor's office, the determination was made there will be no charges filed for the death of Wells.

Wells died on the evening of February 24, 2009 after he was confronted for being irate towards his girlfriend because the door was locked on their residence while she was in the shower. While his girlfriend was in the shower, Wells returned from working on his boat and began beating on the locked door and continued beating after the girlfriend told him she would be out in a minute. After Wells turned off the hot water from the outside, he was approached by the original suspect in this case who told him to leave her alone.

After an attempt to calm the situation, Wells grabbed a mop and began striking the suspect in the stomach with the tip of the handle. When the suspect grabbed the end of the mop a struggle ensued causing Wells to fall. Once Wells was on the ground, the suspect laid on top of him while the girlfriend called 911.

The preliminary autopsy results, from the February 25, 2009 autopsy of Wells, show traumatic asphyxia was the cause of death. This evidence along with the evidence from the incident location and evidence collected after the night of the incident was presented by sheriff's investigators to the Georgetown County Solicitor's Office and the determination was made there is insufficient evidence at this time to make a charge.

Any questions concerning the determination of this case, please contact the Georgetown County Solicitor's Office.

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