



NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | October 10, 2025

NELSON COUNTY INJURY CRASH UPDATE 2

What: Injury Crash

Where: Eastbound US Highway 2 and ND Highway 1, near Lakota

When: Tuesday, September 16, approximately 4:15 PM CT

Road Conditions: Dry

Weather Conditions: Good

Crash Involvement: Two vehicle crash

Type of Crash: Angle

Agencies Involved: NDHP, Nelson County Sheriff's Office, Lakota Ambulance, Lakota Fire & Rescue

Vehicle No. 1: 2017 Volvo truck tractor with trailer

Driver No. 1: Robert Jovic, 37, Lackawanna, NY, not injured

Restraints: Seatbelt in use

Vehicle No. 2: 2016 Jeep Grand Cherokee

Driver No. 2: James Burtness, 83, Lakota, ND, serious injury

Restraints: Seatbelt not in use

Charges: Under investigation

NARRATIVE: On Tuesday, September 16 at approximately 4:15 PM, a 2017 Volvo truck tractor with trailer driven by Robert Jovic was driving east on US Highway 2. A 2016 Jeep Grand Cherokee driven by James Burtness was traveling south on ND Highway 1. The Jeep crossed the eastbound lanes of US Highway 2 and was struck by the Volvo. Both vehicles entered the south ditch. Jovic was not injured, Burtness was seriously injured and transported to Altru Hospital, Grand Forks.

The crash remains under investigation by the North Dakota Highway Patrol.

UPDATE 2: On October 7, 2025, James Burtness died of injuries sustained in the crash.

HEADQUARTERS | 600 East Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 504 | Bismarck, ND 58505
PHONE: (701) 328-2447 | FAX: (701) 328-1717 | ND.gov/NDHP



Contact information: Lt. Jenna Clawson Huibregtse, ndhpsafetyedu@nd.gov, 701-328-2447

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<https://www.nd.gov/ndhp/ndhp-news>