

## **Copper Center man fatally shot by trooper wielded - Anchorage Daily News (AK) - July 9, 2018**

July 9, 2018 | Anchorage Daily News (AK) | Zaz Hollander | news

A Glennallen-based trooper shot and killed a Copper Center resident Friday as the man advanced with a container of "incapacitating, flammable liquid in his hand," according to Alaska State Troopers.

But troopers declined to say just what the liquid was, or why the trooper involved in the shooting decided it was dangerous enough to merit firing his weapon.

**Eric Hash** was fatally shot by an Alaska state trooper Friday, July 6, 2018. (Photo provided by Hash family)

**Eric Hash**, 38, died early Friday

The Alaska Department of Public Safety on Monday identified the trooper who shot Hash as six-year veteran **Kamau Leigh**, the update says. A spokesman said Leigh started working at the Glennallen post in December.

Members of Hash's family have criticized the trooper response. They said Hash was unarmed and was not being violent.

[ Family questions fatal shooting of Copper Center man by troopers]

A family friend said the shooting took place at the McKinley Apartment Building, a 10-unit complex where the family lived.

Hash was shot around 3:15 a.m. after troopers say they received a report that he was assaulting a 72-year-old relative and frightening others.

Five people – two adults and three children – were in the apartment when Leigh got there, troopers say.

A previous troopers statement said Hash left the residence in the Richardson Highway community about 12 miles south of Glennallen but then returned. Some family members locked themselves into a room as he yelled and damaged property.

The update issued Monday morning added new details about what troopers say happened next:

Leigh arrived just before 3:15 a.m. to find Hash holding the unidentified liquid and advancing, the update said. He moved toward the trooper "in close proximity to his service vehicle" before Leigh fired.

He was taken to a hospital but died there.

Troopers provided no further details about the flammable liquid Monday.

"Preliminary investigation determined the fluid was flammable," Department of Public Safety spokesman Jonathon Taylor said in an email. "Ongoing investigation will determine what the contents specifically were."

It's unclear whether Leigh issued any warnings before he fired his weapon, Taylor said.

Nash's family members and friends say he was distraught over the recent deaths of relatives and had started drinking heavily. He smelled of alcohol during Friday's incident but didn't hit anyone, the family said.

Taylor disputed that.

"The caller who dialed 911 to report the initial incident indicated to dispatchers that Hash had hit at least 1 person, was verbally assaulting others, and was damaging property and breaking windows at the residence," he wrote. "The occupants feared for their safety, and had barricaded themselves in a back room."

Samuel Johns, 32, grew up in one of the apartments in the same complex.

Johns said he'd known Hash since the 1990s and described him as a community-minded person who worked at the Red Dog mine for a time and sometimes fronted firewood for people who couldn't afford it right away.

Hash was acting out of character Friday morning, Johns said, because of the alcohol he drank.

The trooper overreacted, Johns said. "He did not deserve to die that way."

Family members also contend the trooper didn't provide first aid or allow relatives to pray with Hash.

Taylor said "preliminary investigation" indicates Leigh attempted first aid shortly after the shooting occurred.

Leigh was one of four troopers who, with a Fairbanks police lieutenant, shot and killed a suspect in a Fairbanks pursuit in 2015.

The Alaska Bureau of Investigation is investigating the shooting. The Office of Special Prosecutions will review the incident and make a determination as to the justification for the discharging of the service weapon, the Department of Public Safety says.