

ST. PAUL

Police release IDs in fatal shooting

Victim had history of mental illness and chemical dependency.

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Authorities have identified the armed man who was shot to death by police on St. Paul's East Side Monday afternoon.

Also released were the names of the four St. Paul police officers who were involved in the killing.

The man was identified as Justin Todd Tolkinen, 28, of St. Paul.

Police were called at 3:20 p.m. Monday on a report that a man was armed with a rifle at 411 White Bear Av. N. near Old Hudson Road in the Sunray-Battle Creek-Highwood neighborhood.

Police negotiators arrived at the scene and tried to talk to Tolkinen. Neighbors said he was wearing what looked like a bullet-resistant vest.

On Tuesday, Sgt. Paul Paulos, a St. Paul police spokesman, said the officers fired beanbag rounds at Tolkinen before they fatally wounded him.

"We used all means before deadly force was an option,"

Paulos said.

The four officers involved in the shooting were identified Tuesday as Jermaine Davis, Patrick Murphy, Brian Hall and Mark Farrington.

Farrington, who has been a St. Paul police officer for 12 years, was one of four officers involved in the 2012 fatal shooting of Victor T. Gaddy, the 41-year-old man who was killed by police after they said he tried to ram squad cars during a drug stop.

Important details about Monday's shooting were still under investigation, Paulos said, including whether Tolkinen shot at police, the type of rifle he had, the circumstances of how he was shot and how many times he was hit.

Neighbors have said that Tolkinen and a woman had moved into the home in the past two weeks. Police have no records of officers being called to that address this year.

Court records indicate that Tolkinen was committed on numerous occasions in the 2000s in Washington and Ramsey counties for mental-illness and chemical-dependency problems. Tolkinen was civilly committed for six months at Regions Hospital in St. Paul from July 2008 to

January 2009.

This January, he was convicted on a drunken driving charge and ordered to chemical dependency treatment and placed on a two-year probation, according to court documents.

On the East Side

On Tuesday morning, police tape that had cordoned off several houses, including the house where the shooting took place, was gone.

Old stickers showing support for the St. Paul Police Athletic League were on the screen of the front door. In the back yard, where neighbors said the shooting occurred, there was glass from a broken screen door and what appeared to be empty cans of beer and energy drink on the deck.

A neighbor said Tolkinen was drinking alcohol as police tried to talk to him.

On Tuesday, another neighbor whose house had been cordoned off with police tape said that he had left home to pick up his son from school on Monday afternoon and then came back to find police blocking the back alley to his driveway.

The neighbor, who asked not to be identified, said that

he witnessed the suspect in his back yard yelling "Get out my yard!" at the police as officers tried to talk to him.

"I was amazed that they took that amount of time to talk to him," the neighbor said.

Since he wasn't able to get to his house, the neighbor went and parked at a business nearby. He later heard the gunfire. "You never know who lives next to you," he said on Tuesday.

A woman and child placed a rose on the steps of the house Tuesday evening, adding to a small pile of mementos already left behind.

St. Paul's use of deadly force

Monday's incident marks the second fatal officer shooting by St. Paul police so far this year.

On Jan. 14, two officers shot and killed 24-year-old Marcus Golden after they responded to an apartment building on the 200 block of University Avenue on a call of a man, known to carry a gun, texting death threats.

Police said that as officers began to talk to Golden, who was sitting in his SUV behind the building, he refused their orders and sped toward one of the officers and they opened

fire and killed him. Police later said they found a loaded handgun within Golden's reach.

The day that police shot and killed Golden, who was black, St. Paul NAACP President Jeff Martin held a news conference and called for an independent investigation into the shooting.

About Monday's shooting, Martin said police at least tried to talk to the suspect and used nonlethal force before fatally shooting him.

"That's the way that every case should be handled," Martin said.

When asked if the race of Tolkinen, who was white, factored into the way the incident was handled, Martin said, "I hope it didn't have anything to do with it. I hope it was just protocol being followed."

Of the dozen men fatally shot by St. Paul police since 2009, nine have been people of color, most of them black.

In an interview earlier this year, St. Paul Police Chief Tom Smith said more guns on the street, more police interactions with the mentally ill, and more people under the influence of drugs or alcohol has led to a spike in fatal shootings.

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