



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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DNA Testing Back in Cooper Case

San Bernardino, CA – San Bernardino County District Attorney Dennis L. Stout today announced that the Department of Justice Crime Lab has completed the testing of the evidence designated in the Joint Forensic DNA Testing Agreement in the case of People v. Kevin Cooper. Cooper was charged with and convicted of the 1983 murders of Doug Ryen, Peggy Ryen, Jessica Ryen, Christopher Hughes and attempting to kill Joshua Ryen, who survived the attack, in Chino Hills, CA. At the time of the murders, Cooper was an escapee from the Chino Institute for Men.

The tests establish that there is strong evidence that Kevin Cooper is the donor of the DNA extracted from the following items of evidence:

- 1) A bloodstain found inside the Ryen's home;
- 2) The saliva on a hand rolled cigarette butt found inside the Ryen station wagon;
- 3) The saliva on a manufactured cigarette butt found inside the Ryen station wagon;
- 4) A bloodstain located on a tee shirt that was found beside a road some distance from the Ryen home. There is strong evidence that one of the victims, Doug Ryen, was the donor of another bloodstain found on the same tee shirt. Cooper is also consistent with being the donor of two additional blood smears and a possible donor of blood spatter on the same tee shirt.

The testing of the bloodstain on the hatchet, which was one of the murder weapons, revealed that the victims Jessica Ryen, Doug Ryen, and Chris Hughes were all possible contributors to this sample. Those three victims can account for all

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the results detected in that mixture. Peggy Ryen and Josh Ryen cannot be excluded as possible minor contributors to this mixture as well.

It has been 19 years since the murders and 17 years since Cooper was convicted and sentenced to death. He remains on Death Row at San Quentin. His case remains on appeal before the Federal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Superior Court in San Diego continues to monitor the progress of the Post Conviction DNA testing in the case. The next review hearing is set for October 22, 2002 in San Diego.

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