

## Tragic Hotel Deaths--One Year Later

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It was June 8th, 2013 that the real story began to emerge in the tragic deaths from the Boone Best Western Hotel, tragedy that has now led to an arrest with other civil legal action pending. It was a year ago today that 11-year old Jeffrey Lee Williams was found dead and his mother, 49-year old Jeannie Williams critically ill in room 225 at the hotel, the same room where a couple from Washington State died April 16th. In that, officials speculated medical conditions led to the deaths, but that was quickly reexamined with the death of the Rock Hill boy and the now lifelong injury his mother suffered. Ultimately, local hotelier Damon Mallatere was arrested and is awaiting trial in the case as the local hotel group was found to have swapped out a pool heater below room 225, and with the exhaust system not matching the previous equipment, deadly carbon monoxide gas leaked into the room above—and three people died. In the year since the deaths, new law has been enacted to require detectors in hotel rooms, that law still expanding with additional facilities being required to use the detectors this year. So this story continues—on the legal side, the ongoing tragedy for the families involved, in laws written and adjusted. Today, we remember the tragedy.