

State Probe into Best Western Deaths to DA

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One major part of the investigation into the failures that led to three deaths at the Boone Best Western this past spring is complete, state investigators passing the information to the 24th District Attorney's office. The report from the State Board of Examiners of Plumbing, Heating and Fire Sprinkler Contractors was completed this week, director Dale Dawson saying that legal actions could come from the board against both unlicensed and licensed contractors as a result of the board's investigation into gas leaks at the hotel. Those gas leaks claimed the lives of Daryl and Shirley Jenkins, a couple from Washington State found dead there April 16th, and of 11-year-old Jeffrey Lee Williams, who died on June 8th. All three died in room 225 at the Best Western. Dawson said their report now goes to the District Attorney, and said that the next step comes from that office. He did say that some contractors could face at least regulatory action as there was evidence that they were not properly licensed for the work done. Bill Bailey of Boone Planning and Inspections said that the heater found at the Best Western in June was not the one last inspected by his department when conversion to natural gas was made in 2012.