



**MARTIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
ROBERT L. CROWDER, SHERIFF**

Detectives Conducting Death Investigation

May 27, 2011 –Detectives with the Martin County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division are currently conducting a death investigation.

At approximately 4:42 p.m. today deputies were dispatched to a residence on 31st Street in Palm City regarding the report of an accidental shooting. The 13-year-old witness, who is not related to the victim and does not reside in the home, reported to detectives that he and the victim were alone inside the house in the living room. He stated the victim left the living room, entered his (victim's) bedroom for a moment, and returned to the living room with a gun. He stated the victim was handling the gun and it discharged, striking the victim in the neck. He then called 911 for assistance. The witness stated they had only been in the home a short time, having arrived there after school. The victim did reside in the residence.

The victim, Patrick Appleton (W/M, 10/15/97), was pronounced deceased by responding Martin County Fire Rescue personnel. Detectives have recovered a .22 caliber revolver. Ownership of the revolver is still under investigation. The investigation is on-going. At this time, detectives believe this to be an accidental shooting and do not suspect foul play. The Office of the Medical Examiner will determine official cause of death.

The exact address of the residence is exempt from public records disclosure pursuant to F.S. 119.071(4)(d)1.a.

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