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Tim Kendall - District Attorney

OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE

On Sunday, July 5, 2015, Paramedics responded to a call for a ten-month old baby drowning in a hot tub at the Village. A maintenance worker for the village saw the baby floating in the hot tub and pulled the baby out. The mother, 26 year old, Ms. Danielle Fischer from the Westlake Village area of Ventura County was visiting Mammoth and staying at a family residence at the Village. The Mammoth Lakes Police Department also responded to the scene and subsequently arrested the mother of the baby for Child Neglect, following an initial investigation.

The District Attorney and the Mono County Investigative Unit was given the case. After securing and analyzing video surveillance and interviewing additional witnesses, it appeared that the mother, Danielle Fischer, was in the hot tub when her baby fell in. The baby was playing near the edge of the tub before falling in. Further, the video showed that Ms. Fischer remained in the hot tub while her baby was floating unconscious for approximately three minutes. She then exits the hot tub and walks past her baby's lifeless body and leaves the area.

A hotel maintenance worker noticed Ms. Fischer in the tub after the baby had fallen in but continued on. The maintenance worker returned to the hot tub area minutes later and Ms. Fischer was gone but the baby was still floating in the tub. The worker pulled the baby out of the hot tub but she was not breathing.

Coincidentally, a family who had been in the hot tub earlier with Ms. Fischer and the baby saw the events unfold from their hotel room. They witnessed Ms. Fischer walking around in circles for 3-4 minutes while the baby was floating in the water before she walked away. Thankfully, one of the family members is a Registered Nurse and fled down the stairs to the hot tub area and performed CPR on the baby. Furthermore, the evidence indicated that Ms. Fischer's blood alcohol level was approximately .22 at the time of the events.

Ms. Fischer was charged by the Mono County District Attorney with a violation of Penal Code Section 273a(a), Felony Child Endangerment with Great Bodily Injury Likely. On October 6, 2015, after entering a guilty plea, Judge Stan Eller sentenced Ms. Fischer to the middle-term of 4 years in prison. The Court suspended the prison sentence pending successful completion of 5 years of formal probation. Ms. Fischer's probation includes 1 year of custody in the Mono County Jail followed by six months in residential rehab; a one-year parenting class; total abstinence from alcohol and drugs and other standard terms and conditions. Ms. Fischer currently remains in the Mono County Jail pending the completion of her one year jail sentence.

The baby has made a full recovery and is in the temporary custody of the grandparents in Ventura County.