

ATLANTIC COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

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Prosecutor

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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2 Page(s)

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MAYS LANDING – An Atlantic City man entered a guilty plea to aggravated manslaughter for killing his wife and faces 24 years in prison, Atlantic County Prosecutor Ted Housel announced today.

Louis Watson, 43, admitted before Superior Court Judge Bernard E. DeLury that he fatally shot his wife Norene Watson, 36, in the couple's McKinley Avenue home on June 29, 2008. Watson will be sentenced on Jan. 14 and must serve 85 percent of the prison term before he is eligible for parole, Assistant Prosecutor Donna Fetzer stated.

There had been documented domestic violence incidents dating back to 2001. Police were called to the home several times for reports of Watson assaulting his wife and her eldest son, Fetzer said.

During the plea hearing the defendant stated that he pointed his loaded handgun at his wife and pulled the trigger, believing his reckless acts would probably cause her death, Fetzer said.

At 2:30 a.m. the morning of the homicide, Atlantic City police received a 911 call from the victim's home for a report of shots fired. When police responded they found the mother of three dead. The Prosecutor's Office Major Crimes Unit responded and conducted the investigation along with the Atlantic City Police Department. Atlantic County Medical Examiner Dr. Hydow Park performed an autopsy later that day and determined the victim died of a single gunshot wound to the face.

Louis Watson was located shortly after the killing in the vicinity of Georgia Avenue. The weapon was in his possession at the time of his arrest. He was charged with the homicide and transported to the Atlantic County Justice Facility where he remains pending sentencing.

The victim was an office coordinator for the AtlantiCare Behavioral Health (ABH) Atlantic City Family Center, located in the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School in Atlantic City. The children are in the care of their paternal grandmother, Fetzer said.

Anyone with information involving serious crimes is asked to call the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office at 609-909-7800 or go to the Prosecutor's Office Web site at <http://www.acpo.org/tips.html> and provide information by filling out the form anonymously on the Submit a Tip page. People can also call Crime Stoppers at 609-652-1234 or 1-800-658-8477 (TIPS). Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those who commit crimes in Atlantic County.