



NJOHSP *at a glance*

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Mass Shooting: Restraining Order Likely Triggered Shootings at Kansas Factory

Investigators believe that the shootings at a lawnmower factory in Hesston, Kansas, on February 25 were likely triggered by a restraining order served on the shooter about 90 minutes before the rampage began. It ordered Cedric Ford, age 38, to stay away from his former girlfriend. Ford shot and killed three people at the plant; he wounded an additional 14, including two shot while he was driving to the plant. The victims appeared to be chosen at random.

Ford obtained the weapons used in the shooting from another former girlfriend, who knew that he was a convicted felon who could not lawfully possess them. Sarah Hopkins, age 28, of Newtown, Kansas, was charged last week with one count of the federal offense of knowingly transferring a firearm to a convicted felon. When the couple broke up, Hopkins had police escort her to pick up the weapons – an AK-47-type semiautomatic rifle and a .40-caliber Glock handgun – from the home they shared. Last week she admitted that in August, she returned both guns to Ford, because he threatened her. The first police officer on the scene was Hesston Police Chief Doug Schroeder, who immediately advanced on the shooter and engaged him in a one-on-one gun battle. Chief Schroeder brought the incident to an end by shooting and killing Ford, likely saving many lives.



Technology: FBI-Apple Standoff Over Terrorist's iPhone Likely to Create Legal Precedent

The stakes are high in the standoff between the FBI and Apple over a court order that Apple assist the Bureau in unlocking an iPhone used by one of the San Bernardino terrorists, because the existing laws are outdated and do not address the currently available encryption technology. Whatever the result in this case, it will likely set a precedent for future law enforcement requests for assistance in obtaining encrypted data.

After Apple CEO Tim Cook's refusal to comply with the order, Apple filed a motion last week in the US District Court for the Central District of California to vacate a California magistrate judge's order to help the FBI access the phone. In the motion, Apple disputes the government's contention that the order applies for "just this once" and "just this phone," stating that the government has filed multiple other applications for similar orders, some of which are pending in other courts.

In response, a Justice Department motion stated that allowing Apple to deny the government's request would impede an investigation into a terrorist attack. It disputed Apple's contention that the government has asked the company to build a "backdoor" to the iPhone, saying that Apple would "retain custody of the software at all times," without compromising the security of iPhones.

Oral arguments in this case will be presented before the US Magistrate Judge in Riverside, California, on March 22.

Demonstrations: KKK and Counterprotesters Clash at Protest in California

Three people were stabbed and 13 detained by police on February 27 when participants in a Ku Klux Klan (KKK) anti-immigration rally at a park in Anaheim, California, clashed with counterprotesters who were waiting for them. According to Anaheim police, when the six KKK supporters – dressed in black, with Confederate flag patches – arrived and got out of their vehicle, about 30 anti-Klan protesters attacked them. Several different fights broke out, spread out along a city block (see photo). Klansmen stabbed three counterprotesters, and KKK members were kicked and stomped on the ground. Police said one counterprotester was stabbed with "the decorative end of a flagpole," and was hospitalized in critical condition.



Of the 13 people taken into police custody, six were Klansmen, and seven were counterprotesters. Seven of the 13 have been charged with a variety of assault and abuse charges.

Contact Information

Any agency with information or comments/questions on this or other analytical products, please contact the NJOHSP Analysis Bureau at analysis@njohsp.gov or 609-584-4000.

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