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No Charges in Crystal baby remains case

Crystal Police and Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman announced Friday that there would be no charges brought at this time in the case of the newborn baby buried in Crystal couple's backyard.

According to the officials, there were conflicting stories of whether the baby girl was born alive. The Hennepin County Medical Examiner's office said that because several years had passed since the baby's remains were buried, it was impossible to determine if the baby was born dead or alive or if there was any injury at the time of death.

"In order to charge someone with a crime, we need sufficient admissible evidence in order to prove our case beyond a reasonable doubt to a jury or judge," Freeman said. "Despite an excellent investigation by Crystal Police, and other agencies, that evidence does not exist."

In late February, after police were called to the home of Duane and Tiffany Clark, Duane Clark went to the police station and told officers he had buried a dead baby in the backyard about four years ago. Police spent a day thawing the ground and then digging up the remains, which medical examiner investigators said were those of a girl born after 30 to 38 weeks of gestation. Crystal Police interviewed numerous people and seized computers from the home as part of the investigation.

"Unfortunately, evidence was not found to move forward with criminal charges in this hideous matter," said Crystal Police Chief John Banick. "The Crystal Police Department would like to thank the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office Crime Lab and the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office for their assistance."

Although a potential homicide never faces a statute of limitations, until substantial new evidence is developed, the case is considered closed.