

Driver of submerged truck found safe

Editor's note: Rescue crews returned to the scene of the river Monday. Shortly before 12 noon, Atchison Police Chief Mike Wilson told MSC News the truck was expected to be pulled from the river by early afternoon. Atchison Fire Chief Ted Graf later confirmed that the truck had been removed. Wilson said the recovery came around 3:00 following what he said was a challenging effort, due to a very swift current in the river.

(KAIR)--The driver of a pickup truck that sank into the Missouri River at Atchison Sunday has been located.

Atchison Police Chief Mike Wilson tells MSC News the 48-year-old man was found safe early Monday morning. "He confirmed that he had driven the truck into the river based on some mental health issues that we're addressing this morning. Once he drove into the river, he actually got out of the truck and left the area."

The truck, when it went into the river around 8:30 Sunday night, had been spotted by an eyewitness on the Amelia Earhart Memorial Bridge. "It was still somewhat daylight at that point, it was twilight, so you could see pretty well looking out there. We had a passerby actually on the bridge that looked down and saw it go in. We had two officers that arrived within seconds. Both of them saw the vehicle just before it became completely submerged."

Local rescue teams joined police at the river, with the Atchison County Rescue Unit and the Atchison Fire Department, utilizing rescue boats to search for the truck.

Believing that they had located the vehicle underwater, the location was marked, and the effort was called off around 11:15 Sunday night.

Wilson said the recovery of the truck is expected to resume Monday morning. "Several boats on the river did locate a vehicle about 15-yards off shore, about 75-yards south of the south boat ramp, and that is where we believe that it is now lodged and that is where we will attempt to hook on it in the morning."

Atchison Fire Chief Ted Graf said that effort is expected to be assisted through the expertise of a dive team, likely coming from the Kansas City area.

Because of the driver's reported mental health issues, MSC News will withhold his

name.

Editor's note: The following is the initial complete story after Sunday night's recovery was called off.

(KAIR)--Although it can't be said with certainty, authorities remain hopeful that a pickup truck, submerged in the Missouri River, at Atchison, was unoccupied at the time it went into the water Sunday.

Atchison Police Chief Mike Wilson told MSC News at the scene the truck was spotted by an eyewitness on the Amelia Earhart Memorial Bridge around 8:30 Sunday night. "It was still somewhat daylight at that point, it was twilight, so you could see pretty well looking out there. We had a passerby actually on the bridge that looked down and saw it go in. We had two officers that arrived within seconds. Both of them saw the vehicle just before it became completely submerged."

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As the water rescue was underway, Wilson said his department began the search for the suspected driver of the truck. "The person who we believe [was] driving that vehicle, we actually had a couple of reported sightings of him as we were down at the river scene. We've actually been to a number of residences, as we approach the midnight hour, attempting to locate the driver of that vehicle after several sightings."

Along with the Atchison area authorities, representatives of the Missouri Water Patrol were on site as the rescue and recovery was conducted Sunday night.

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