

RIVERSIDE: Auto-theft suspect killed by police



STAFF PHOTO/RICHARD BROOKS

Police investigate an officer-involved shooting that began with a stolen-car investigation at the Peppertree Place Apartments in Riverside on Monday, Feb. 25.

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Police shot and killed an auto theft suspect Monday night, Feb. 26, at a Riverside apartment complex.

Riverside County coroner's officials said a 39-year-old man died at Riverside Community Hospital at 9:38 p.m., about 50 minutes after he was shot by Riverside police at an apartment complex on Arlington Avenue near Van Buren Boulevard.

Coroner's officials have not released the man's identity.

Officers were summoned to the Peppertree Place Apartments parking lot about 8:50 p.m. by reports of a car theft in progress, police said Monday night.

"Witnesses pointed out somebody in a car and said, 'That's the guy who tried to steal our car,' " Lt. Chuck Griffiths said at the scene. "Officers chase the guy and ended up cornering him ... and an officer-involved shooting occurred."

No officers were injured. The officers who fired have not been identified.

Police said when they tried to stop the man, he drove away in the stolen car through the apartment complex. During a short pursuit through the parking complex, the driver tried to speed out a west gate but crashed with another vehicle, Sgt. David Amador said in a written department statement.

When a police officer followed, authorities said the suspect rammed the driver side of the patrol car, prompting two officers to open fire.

The Riverside police Robbery/Homicide Unit is investigating the shooting.