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DelDOT: Trinity ET-Plus guardrail end not involved in fatal crash



Police said Jazmyn Lewis, 22, of Bear, Del., was killed early Sunday during a crash on South College Avenue. A type of guardrail end under national scrutiny was not involved in the crash, according to investigators. Facebook

ALEX WIGGLESWORTH, *PHILLY.COM*

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A type of guardrail head under national scrutiny due to safety concerns was not involved in a crash in Glasgow, Del. that killed a 22-year-old woman early Sunday.

An investigation has determined Trinity Industries' ET-Plus guardrail head was not capping the guardrail that pierced the car in which Jazmyn Lewis was a front-seat passenger, said Geoff Sundstrom, of the Delaware Department of Transportation.

Lewis was struck by the guardrail, ejected through the rear windshield, and pronounced dead at the scene.

"It was actually a reverse head, where the car left its lane and hit what would be called the trailing end of the guardrail, the end not normally facing traffic," Sundstrom said Wednesday.

He said there was no treatment on the end of the guardrail, which is typical for its type.

State police have [charged the car's driver](#), 26-year-old Ernest McGill Jr., with vehicular homicide and driving under the influence for allegedly drifting out of his lane and striking the guardrail. McGill suffered minor injuries in the crash, according to investigators.

Though the ET-Plus end treatment was not implicated in the crash, Delaware joined 29 other states in banning its installation Oct. 31.

DelDOT said it's not sure how many of the now scrutinized guardrail heads are already in use across the state but that the agency is reviewing 2,101 end treatments to determine whether they are of the Trinity ET-Plus variety.

Though the product is intended to cushion the impact of a vehicle striking a guardrail end, claims have surfaced in a series of lawsuits that it instead turns into a spear, in some cases severing victims' limbs or contributing to their deaths.

Delaware's announcement came less than two weeks after a federal jury in Texas found Trinity Industries made a cost-cutting design change to the ET-Plus guardrail head without informing the Federal Highway Administration. The Texas-based manufacturer was ordered to pay \$175 million.

Trinity has [suspended production and sale](#) of the ET-Plus guardrail end pending federally-mandated crash retesting.

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