

Local man dies in blizzard crash

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

Wednesday, 19 March 2014 19:41 -

A white-out is how the local rescue captain described conditions Tuesday afternoon that took the life of a Gothenburg man in a two-vehicle accident.

Killed in the accident about 12 miles north of Gothenburg was 57-year-old Glen Smith.

Custer County chief deputy sheriff Troy Smith said William Warren, 43, of Arnold received facial injuries in the crash.

Both men were taken by ambulance to Gothenburg Memorial Hospital where Glen died, Troy said.

“It was almost a white out and you couldn’t see 100 feet ahead of you,” said Jason Wagner, rescue captain of the Gothenburg Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Unit.

The accident happened at the intersection of Highway 47 and Road 779 in Custer County, five miles north of the Dawson County line.

Troy said Glen was southbound on Highway 47, in a 1997 Ford F-150 pickup truck, when he might have stopped for other vehicles in front of him or was backing up as a late-winter storm dumped as much as 13 inches in the area.

The pickup was rear-ended by the 1997 Jeep Cherokee driven by Warren, he said.

“Visibility was near zero,” Troy said.

Warren was not wearing a seat belt and officials won’t know about Glen until an autopsy is

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completed, he said.

Both men were alone in their vehicles, Troy said, adding that officials are still investigating the crash.

The chief deputy was outside of Arnold investigating another accident when he was called to the crash on Highway 47.

Strong winds, low visibility and slick roads contributed to about five accidents that day in Custer County, he said.

“Slow down and don’t go out if you don’t have to,” Troy said, when blizzards or heavy snowstorms are raging.

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