

## **PROSTITUTE SAYS POLICE WARNED HER OF KILLER OFFICIALS DOWNPLAY TALK OF SERIAL MURDERS**

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An Inkster **prostitute** said Friday that **police** had **warned her** two months ago to avoid a man driving a van because he could be killing **prostitutes** .

"I heard about it a couple months ago from the Inkster **police** ," the 24-year-old woman said Friday. "A detective asked me if I knew that there was somebody going around picking up **prostitutes** and cutting them up.

"They said they had pictures, but they didn't show them to me because they didn't want to spoil my day," said the woman, who agreed to be interviewed by the Free Press on condition that she not be identified.

She said **police** "kept on asking me, 'Did I know anything about someone in a van who was acting funny?' "

Inkster **police** spokeswoman Nisah Tahara said she had no information about **police** warning anyone about a man endangering **prostitutes** .

On Thursday, Tahara said state **police** are working with Inkster, Ypsilanti and Romulus **police** to determine if the unsolved killings **of** 10 women in those cities dating to 1985 were linked.

She said two slayings in Ypsilanti and four in Romulus were being compared to four Inkster slayings. Three **of** the victims, killed last year, had prostitution records, she said.

But Friday, when asked for more information about the possible serial murders, she responded, "Serial murders that don't exist -- not in the proportion that they're being reported."

Inkster **Police** Chief Terry Colwell and other **police** officials have had no comment.

According to death certificates and other records, the three women killed last year were strangled or smothered. One was also stabbed.

The body **of** the fourth woman, Renee Kendrick, was found Sunday in a burning house on Inkster's southwest side. The Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office ruled **her** death a homicide and said she died **of** soot and smoke inhalation. Tahara said **her** hands and feet were bound and there was a telephone cord tied around **her** neck. She said Kendrick had no record **of** prostitution.

On Friday, a maid at the Mona Lisa Motel on Michigan Avenue in Inkster said Kendrick worked there as a maid for about two weeks before she was killed.

"She didn't go into **her** life -- she just did **her** work," said the woman, who identified herself only as Katherine. She said Kendrick was quiet and didn't appear to be a **prostitute** .

Ypsilanti Mayor Clyde King said Thursday he knew nothing about serial killings in his city, and Romulus Mayor Beverly McAnally said city **police** were not calling the killings "serial murders."

A Romulus detective assigned to the case could not be reached Friday. An Ypsilanti detective was not available, and a State **Police** spokesman said Inkster was handling public relations for the case and would not comment further. Tahara said she had no specific information about the Romulus and Ypsilanti cases.

The Inkster **prostitute** was working Michigan Avenue when she agreed to be interviewed by the Free Press.

"I had heard a couple **of** my friends talking about a guy who picked them up at different times in a van and was acting weird," she said. "My friends just said he was strange, and if a new van came around, not to get in it. Now I carry a knife in my boot.

"Cops -- you know what they tell me? 'If you're going to work the streets, I'd do it in Detroit -- get out **of** Inkster because there's someone around here going around acting like a trick or a john and picking up girls and cutting them to pieces. Go to Detroit.' "

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