

# Two killed in fiery crash on Highway 44

**PORTSMOUTH** -- Two people were killed and another person was injured in an accident along Highway 44 east of Portsmouth Sunday afternoon, June 24.

Iowa State Patrol reports that a 1998 GMC driven by John Veral Smith, 63, Portsmouth, was pull-

ing a boat on a trailer westbound on the highway at about 4:35 p.m. A 2011 International semi-truck driven by Dennis Johnson, 64, Luverne, MN, was eastbound on the highway.

Reports said the Smith vehicle allegedly crossed the center line and the two vehicles collided

head-on about one mile east of Portsmouth.

Reports said both vehicles were on fire.

Both drivers and a passenger in the Smith vehicle, Mary Louise Smith, 68, Portsmouth, were transported by Medivac Ambulance/Rescue to Myrtue Medi-

cal Center in Harlan, where the drivers were pronounced dead and the passenger was treated for injuries.

The highway was closed for nearly five hours as fire and rescue crews put out the fire and cleared wreckage from the scene.