



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

ADMINISTRATION

3200 East Highway 34
c/o 500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-5070
Phone: (605) 773-3478
Fax: (605) 773-3194

August 3, 2002
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michael Winder
(605) 773-3478

Inmate Hospitalized Following Penitentiary Assault

(Pierre)- A state prison inmate is hospitalized following an assault Saturday at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls.

Steven Heckel, age 49, was unresponsive when found in his cell at the Jameson Annex of the Penitentiary at approximately 12:20 PM. Penitentiary staff began CPR and continued efforts to revive Heckel until paramedics arrived. Heckel was transported to McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls, where he is in critical condition.

Heckel's cellmate, Chris Hill, is suspected of assaulting Heckel. The Division of Criminal Investigation is in charge of the investigation.

Hill, age 26, was originally sentenced in 1995 to five years in prison for Aggravated Assault out of Pennington County. He is currently serving a twelve-year sentence for Aggravated Assault, a consecutive four-year sentence for Possession of a Weapon by a Prisoner and two years for Sliming.

Heckel is serving a six-year sentence for Aggravated Assault out of Brown County.