

No decision made charging inmates

No criminal charges have been filed against the Missouri State Penitentiary inmates who reportedly killed another inmate then eluded investigators for four days.

Cole County Prosecutor Bill Tackett was planning to meet with corrections officials today to discuss the case and review the investigative reports.

But because he hadn't reviewed the reports by late this morning, Tackett couldn't specify what charges might be filed against MSP inmates Chris Sims, 27, and Shannon Phillips, 35.

However, if it's determined Sims and Phillips had a plan to kill fellow inmate Toby Viles, 28, they could face first-degree murder charges, Tackett said.

First-degree murder is punishable by the death penalty.

Sims and Phillips reportedly killed Viles at the prison's ice plant late Wednesday. Autopsy reports indicate Viles died of blunt trauma to the head.

Tackett said he plans to make a decision on charges by Tuesday or Wednesday. However, if DNA evidence needs to be tested, it could be some time before charges are filed, he said.

Tackett noted there's no rush to file charges because both Sims and Philips are serving life sentences and have no chance of parole.