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## Missouri executes man using controversial drug

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NCR Today

Missouri executed last night its third death row prisoner in three months using a drug that death penalty opponents say may cause excruciating pain before the prisoner dies.

The U.S. Supreme Court had ordered a temporary stay in the execution of Herbert Smulls, 56, Tuesday night, two and a half hours before his scheduled Wednesday 12:01 a.m. execution. Smulls' lawyers had asked the high court to consider the use of the drug pentobarbital in the execution.

The Supreme Court lifted the temporary stay without explanation late Wednesday afternoon, and Smulls was pronounced dead at 10:20 p.m. Wednesday.

Smulls was convicted and sentenced to death for killing a St. Louis County jeweler and badly injuring his wife during a 1991 robbery.

States are finding it increasingly difficult to find the drugs they need for lethal injections. NCR reporter Brian Roewe wrote about this topic, "States face dwindling sources for lethal injection drugs," in our January Pro-Life special section, premium content available for NCR print subscribers.

Read more about the Smulls execution and pentobarbital in this Associated Press story: Missouri executes man for jeweler's 1991 death.

The AP Report says that the final words of Oklahoma death row inmate Michael Lee Wilson, who was executed this month by lethal injection with pentobarbital, reportedly were, "I feel my whole body burning."

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