

Police: Condition of 2 local men in horse-vehicle crash improves

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The two Sulphur Springs men injured when the horses they were riding were struck by a pickup Friday night were identified by police Monday as 25-year-old Ignacio V. Meraz-Herrera and 30-year-old Eduardo Nunez-Hernandez.

According to police, the two men were riding horses on U.S. Business 67, the section of Main Street just west of Turtle Creek Road, at 8:44 p.m. Friday, a poorly lit stretch of road as it was getting dark.

Michael D. Elkins, 47, of Sulphur Springs was traveling west in red Dodge Ram 1500. The driver said he looked at something in his truck, then back at the road and struck both horses. He told police he did not have time to hit his brakes until contact was already made, accident reports noted.

Both men were unconscious when officials arrived; medical helicopters were requested. A landing zone was established nearby. Meraz-Herrera was flown to Trinity Mother Frances Hospital in Tyler and Nunez-Hernandez was flown to Medical City Hospital in Plano, both in critical condition Friday night, at least one with a head wound.

According to police, both men's conditions had improved Monday; both are expected to recover from their injuries.

One of the horses hit in the wreck died at the scene. The second appeared to have sustained a hip or upper leg injury, according to reports.