



South Carolina Department of Corrections

May 16, 2025

For immediate release

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COLUMBIA, S.C. — The S.C. Department of Corrections received an order of execution for Death Row inmate Stephen Christopher Stanko today for the death of Henry Lee Turner of Conway.

The order was served on inmate Stanko this morning. Stanko's execution date will be June 13, which is set by law for four Fridays from the date the department receives the order.

By law, Stanko will be asked to elect his method of execution 14 days before execution day. Methods available are lethal injection, the electric chair and firing squad.

Stanko is serving two death sentences for crimes committed on April 7-8, 2005, in Horry and Georgetown counties. On April 7, Stanko bound, beat and strangled his girlfriend, Laura Ling, to death while beating and raping her daughter, who was a minor, in their Murrells Inlet home. He also sliced the daughter's throat in an attempt to murder her, but she survived.

After Ling's murder, Stanko drove to Conway during the early morning hours of April 8, 2005, to the home of Henry Turner, 74, who considered Stanko a friend. While there, Stanko shot and killed Turner, stole his truck and fled. He was arrested several days later in Augusta, Ga., after a new female friend became aware of his wanted status and turned him into authorities.

Stanko was first convicted and sentenced to death in Georgetown County in August 2006 for two counts of kidnapping, first-degree criminal sexual conduct, armed robbery and assault and battery with intent to kill for Ling's death and her daughter's rape and attempted murder.

Stanko received his second death sentence in November 2009, when he was convicted and sentenced to death in Horry County for murder and armed robbery for Turner's death.

The execution warrant is for Turner's death as those state and federal appeals have been exhausted.