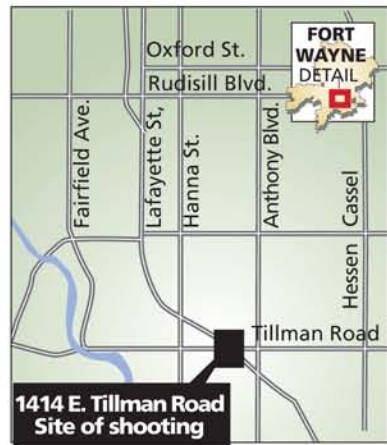


## Robbery suspect dies in street

Liquor store employee hit in leg in gunfire exchange



The Journal Gazette

**HOLLY ABRAMS**  
*The Journal Gazette*

Gunfire at a south-side liquor store Wednesday left a suspected robber dead and a store clerk wounded, Fort Wayne police said.

Although shots were fired inside the business, police said they didn't know whether the clerk shot the robber in self-defense.

The man who died had entered Belmont Beverage, 1414 E. Tillman Road, near Lafayette Street, and demanded money just after 2:30 p.m. When officers arrived, he was found lying in the middle of Tillman and pronounced dead at the scene, police

said.

The other man, an employee at the store, was shot in the leg, said Mike Joyner, police spokesman. He was listed in fair condition at a hospital Wednesday night. Their names were not released Wednesday.

Mike Sosenheimer was just arriving at the liquor store to work his shift when he was greeted by the sight of numerous police cars.

"I was wondering what the heck was going on," he said. "I could see the squad cars, but I never knew they would be stopping here."

An employee with Belmont Bev-

**Robber, Page 4A**



Samuel Hoffman | The Journal Gazette

Fort Wayne police stand outside the shattered front door of the Belmont Beverage store at 1414 E. Tillman Road, scene of a fatal shooting on Wednesday.

## ROBBERY

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"I was wondering what the heck was going on," he said. "I could see the squad cars, but I never knew they would be stopping here."

An employee with Belmont Beverage for about 10 years, Sosenheimer said he has worked at the Tillman Road location since September.

He said he was shocked to hear about the shooting, having never experienced anything like that during his time with the company.

"I always feel safe when here," Sosenheimer said. "People have always been real nice,

friendly and cordial."

Police kept a portion of Tillman Road blocked off for about two hours. A police dog was brought in to scour the area.

Glass in the store's door was shot out, and a bullet hole was visible in a front window.

"Shots were fired inside the building," Joyner said.

The robber was armed with a handgun, which was found by officers at the scene, police said.

"It appears that there were two weapons involved," said John Chambers, police spokesman.

Police did not release details Wednesday night on whether others might have been involved in the shooting or whether money was taken in the robbery.

Michael Beckman has lived across the street from Belmont Beverage for about three years. He said he was watching his daughter at the time of the shooting but heard nothing from inside his home.

"I looked out my front door and seen nothing but cops," he said.

Wednesday's robbery was no surprise to Beckman. That same store had been robbed before, he said.

According to police records, officers responded to three robberies at the store in 2008. Police investigated two calls in May and a third in July.

Beckman described the scene as "unbelievable."

Allen County Coroner Dr. E. Jon Brandenberger said an autopsy is planned today.

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