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Crime-scene tape comes down at Violette Avenue home

WATERVILLE -- Police investigating the disappearance of 20-month-old Ayla Reynolds have finished their investigative work involving the Violette Avenue home where she was seen last.

BY BEN MCCANNA



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WATERVILLE — Police investigating the disappearance of 20-month-old Ayla Reynolds have finished their investigative work involving the Violette Avenue home where she was seen last.

According to Department of Public Safety Spokesman Steve McCausland, Maine State Police “released the house back to the occupants” late Saturday afternoon, but he declined to discuss what, if anything, investigators had found.

Since Dec. 22, yellow crime scene tape had been a fixture at the modest gray bungalow.

As of Saturday evening, however, the tape was gone. The white evidence tape that had sealed all windows and doors was also gone.

The investigation into Ayla Reynolds’ disappearance continued into its second week Saturday, but it was the first day of investigation under new leadership.

A day earlier, Waterville Police Chief Joseph Massey announced in a written statement that he had invited

the Maine State Police Major Crimes Unit to take the lead role in the case.

He added that the case had evolved from a missing-person case into a criminal investigation.

The Major Crimes Unit handles homicides, suspicious deaths and major investigations.

Earlier on Saturday, the agency issued its first statement on the case.

“There are no new developments,” McCausland said in a written release.

McCausland added that investigators from the state and Waterville police were working on the case Saturday.

Early in the day, there was clear activity behind the yellow tape at the Violette Avenue home. A vehicle from the state police evidence response team was parked in the driveway, and several police vehicles were parked in the street.

By nightfall, the police cars were gone, the driveway was empty and the lights in the home were left on.

According to the city assessor’s office, Phoebe DiPietro has owned 29 Violette Ave. since 1998. Her son, Justin DiPietro, reported Ayla missing on Dec. 17.

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