

# Florida Supreme Court refuses to stop Tampa man's execution

TAMPA - The Florida Supreme Court refused today to grant a stay of execution for Wayne Tompkins, concluding that there is "no merit to the issues raised" in his latest round of appeals. Tompkins, 51, is scheduled to die by lethal injection at 6 p.m. unless he is granted relief by a federal court.

He has spent 23 years on death row for murder, convicted of strangling his girlfriend's daughter and burying her body beneath their Tampa home. Prosecutors said he tried to force himself on 15-year-old Lisa DeCarr and killed her when she resisted his sexual advances.

The teenager's mother reported her missing to the police in March 1983, believing that she might have run away. But with a psychic's help in June 1984, authorities unearthed skeletal remains wrapped in a pink bathrobe from about a foot of dirt below the porch of the southeast Seminole Heights home where Lisa, Tompkins and her mother had lived.

Also today, the Innocence Project of Florida said it would file a motion to preserve the evidence in Tompkins' case for 60 days even if he is executed tonight. The nonprofit organization contends that more DNA testing should be done in the case because there are doubts, it says, about whether the bones found actually belonged to Lisa DeCarr.

"There are serious doubts left in this case, and we fully intend to get to the bottom of what really happened," executive director Seth Miller said in a released statement. "Tompkins shouldn't be executed when such important questions as the identity of the victim remain. Some day soon, we will make sure the truth comes out."