

Alabama plans to carry out the first execution by nitrogen gas today

Alabama is poised to carry out the first known execution using nitrogen gas Thursday to put Kenneth Smith to death for his role in a 1988 murder for hire.

Smith, who survived the state's initial attempt to execute him by lethal injection in 2022, is tentatively set to die Thursday evening as the state endeavors to use a wholly new method of execution some experts are concerned could cause him to experience excessive pain or a torturous death.

Little is known about how the method, known as nitrogen hypoxia, will be carried out because the state's published protocol bears redactions experts say shield key details from public scrutiny. The state, in court records, indicated the redactions were made to maintain security and it believes death by nitrogen gas to be "perhaps the most humane method of execution ever devised."

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<https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/25/us/kenneth-smith-nitrogen-gas-execution-alabama/index.html>

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