

Woman gets 20 years for killing boyfriend

An eastern Iowa woman has been sentenced to 20 years in prison for killing her boyfriend.

Debra Wierck, 38, pleaded guilty in July to reduced charges of voluntary manslaughter and assault while committing a felony.

Wierck was originally charged with first-degree murder for the stabbing death of Robert Taylor, 38.

Wierck was sentenced Tuesday in Buchanan County District Court to two consecutive 10-year sentences. Judge Bruce Zager noted that under state law, Wierck's sentence could be cut in half if she behaves well.

Public defender Thomas Goodman of Dubuque read a statement for Wierck at sentencing. He said Wierck regrets "the unfortunate circumstances that occurred" as the result of a cycle of verbal and physical abuse that had been fueled Feb. 13 by drugs and alcohol.

He said Wierck stabbed Taylor during a fight in which each of the two at one time held the knife.

Autopsy reports show knife wound was fatal

An Independence man who died Wednesday was stabbed in the chest, according to autopsy reports released Friday.

Police found Robert Dale Taylor, 38, in his home around 9:45 p.m. Wednesday. They arrested his girlfriend, Debra Wierck, 38, on Thursday. She was charged with first-degree murder.

The Buchanan County medical examiner says Taylor died of a knife wound to the chest.

Wierck is being held in the Buchanan County Jail on a \$500,000 bond.