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Homicide victim's remains unearthed

The Courier

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WAVERLY -- Local authorities will explore whether technological advancements may shed light on an unsolved homicide case that is more than 30 years old. State experts plan to look for new evidence in the death of Marie Lisa Peak, who was 20 years old when she disappeared in 1976.

Peak's remains were disinterred Friday, said Bremer County Attorney Kasey Wadding.

They will be sent to the State Medical Examiner's Office in Ankeny for re-examination in "an attempt to discover additional evidence for further examination and possible comparison," according to a news release.

"With the advancement of technology, we think it's probably prudent ... " Wadding said.

The planned re-examination is the latest step in an ongoing investigation that involves the Bremer County Sheriff's Office, the Waverly Police Department and the State Medical Examiner's Office.

Peak's body was discovered in Bremer County just north of Waverly in September 1976. An autopsy indicated Peak was a victim of sexual assault and died of a broken neck, according to old Courier articles. At the time of her disappearance, Peak, a Knoxville native, was a journalism student at Wartburg College.

Authorities have made progress on the case in the last 10 years or so, though "nothing that narrows it significantly yet" has been found, Wadding said. The planned re-examination of Peak's remains by investigators may include but would not be limited to DNA evidence, he added.