



**FOR PUBLIC RELEASE: Coroner Judgement of Inquiry and Inquest  
Inquisition and Recommendations**

Department of Justice, Legal Services  
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<b>Yukon Coroners Service: Judgement of Inquiry into the death of:</b> <u>Jay Vaughn Brown</u>		
<b>Coroner Investigative File No.:</b> <u>45202014005</u>		
<b>Name:</b> <u>Jay Vaughn Brown</u>	<b>Date of Birth:</b> <u>1961/07/07</u> <small>YYYY/MM/DD</small>	<b>Date of Death:</b> <u>2014/04/2014</u> <small>YYYY/MM/DD</small>
<b>Address:</b> <u>Lot 9 Dredge Pond Subdivision, Dawson City, Yukon</u>		
<b>Ethnic Origin:</b> <u>Caucasian</u>	<b>Province/Territory:</b> <u>Yukon</u>	<b>Postal Code:</b> <u></u>
<b>Location of Death:</b> <u>Lot 9 Dredge Pond Subdivision</u>		

**Cause of Death**

Carbon Monoxide Toxicity  
Other Significant Medical Causes Contributing to Death: Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease

**Manner of Death**

Accidental

**Autopsy Findings**

An autopsy was conducted at Vancouver General Hospital on April 23, 2014. The heart examination showed moderate to severe stenosis of the coronary arteries (hardening and narrowing of the blood vessels that supply blood to the heart). This can decrease the amount of blood that is flowing to the heart muscle (ischemia) thereby impairing heart function. Upon microscopic examination of the heart muscle, there were acute ischemic changes noted.

**Toxicological Findings**

Toxicology analysis showed a significantly elevated concentration of carboxyhemoglobin (a marker of carbon monoxide exposure). The level of carboxyhemoglobin detected in the blood of Mr. Brown was 59%. Ratios of carboxyhemoglobin exceeding 40% are considered severe poisoning. Levels greater than 60% may lead to instant or delayed death. Alcohol was detected at levels consistent with a moderate level of intoxication (.08%-.18%).

**Circumstances of Death**

The camp trailer and surrounding property was used by Mr. Brown as a summer residence when he came to Dawson to mine. The trailer is not connected to electrical service and was heated by a small wood stove. There was a small generator sitting just outside the door to the trailer. There was an extension cord running from the generator into the trailer through the door. The generator was found to be in the "on" position and was noted to be out of fuel. The door to the trailer was missing the door knob and was slightly ajar. The door would not close or latch shut. There was a blue length of rope just inside the door of the trailer. It appeared that the rope was used to hold the door closed as it was just the right length to run out of the door and around the door knob. There was a small kitchen in the trailer, with a propane stove/oven and a propane fridge. The burners on the stove were all in the "off" position. Mr. Brown was located lying on his left side in front of the wood stove. The wood stove had long since burned out, and the trailer was frigid and cold. Mr. Brown was noted to be wearing a black sweatshirt with a red sweatshirt underneath, tan denim pants with a belt and boots which were laced and tied.

**Significant Factors/Conclusions**

Mr. Brown had moderate to severe atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease that impeded the amount of blood to the heart and impaired the function of the heart.

Post mortem alcohol levels were consistent with a moderate level of intoxication. Alcohol has a depressant effect (decreases brain and breathing responses). Certain factors affect the way an individual's body reacts to alcohol. Factors may include body weight/type, the amount of food consumed prior to consuming alcohol; gender, the rate of consumption, and functional tolerance all influence the body's response to alcohol. It remains unclear what role, if any, alcohol may have played in the death of Mr. Brown.

There are two potential sources of carbon monoxide that were identified in the investigation. The generator outside the door was in the "on" position and out of gas. The door was ajar and it is plausible that exhaust from the generator made its way into the trailer. The body of Mr. Brown was found in front of the wood stove. The wood stove and/or chimney may also be a source of carbon monoxide. The carbon monoxide could have come from one or another source, or a combination of both.

**Recommendations**

No recommendations

Update:

Immediately upon being advised of the finding of carboxyhemoglobin in the blood of Mr. Brown the appropriate officials in Dawson City were notified by the Coroner. The Coroner confirmed with officials that the trailer was not in use and that no other occupants were potentially at risk.

Prior to use of this camp trailer at a future date sources for carbon monoxide must be identified and checked and a carbon monoxide detector installed.



Signature, Chief Coroner

Whitehorse, Yukon

Province/Territory

June 20, 2014

Date

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