



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

Department of Justice, Legal Services  
Yukon Coroners Service  
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Yukon Coroners Service: Judgement of Inquiry into the death of: <u>Margaret Johnson</u>		
Coroner Investigative File No.: <u>45202015062</u>		
Name: <u>Margaret Johnson</u>	Date of Birth: <u>1944/06/09</u> <small>YYYY/MM/DD</small>	Date of Death: <u>2016/02/23</u> <small>YYYY/MM/DD</small>
Address: <u>Whitehorse, Yukon</u> <small>Street Address</small>	<small>Province/Territory</small>	<small>Postal Code</small>
Ethnic Origin: <u>Caucasian</u>	Location of Death: <u>Whitehorse General Hospital</u>	

## Cause of Death

Exsanguination due to Traumatic Injuries to Lower Extremities due to Motor Vehicle Collision with Wheelchair.

## Manner of Death

Accidental

## Autopsy Findings

No autopsy

Severe injuries to both lower extremities. Blunt force trauma.

## Toxicological Findings

Performed at BC Provincial Toxicology Centre. No alcohol detected.

### Circumstances of Death

On February 23, 2016 at 18:28hrs Mrs. Johnson was travelling northbound in her motorized wheelchair in the curb lane of Second Avenue in Whitehorse. Second Avenue is a four lane, asphalt road that runs north to south. A 2008 Ford Ranger was travelling southbound in the same lane. A head-on collision between the Ford Ranger and the wheelchair occurred on Second Avenue between Strickland Street and Alexander Street. Mrs. Johnson died at Whitehorse General Hospital shortly after the collision.

There are no traffic control signs, cross walk signs, or other relevant signs where the collision occurred. There were no view obstructions. Road conditions, mechanical failures and/or speed of the Ford Ranger were all ruled out as contributory causes to the collision. The seated height of Mrs. Johnson in her wheelchair was approximately the height of the hood of the Ford Ranger. The wheelchair did not have effective reflective striping or flags, and Mrs. Johnson was dressed in dark clothing.

The sidewalk in front of the vacant lot between Strickland Street and Jarvis Street was impassible for a wheelchair and had not been cleared of snow and sand. There was a well worn foot path down the middle of the sidewalk. The sidewalk between Strickland and Alexander Street was in good, clear condition and able to easily be navigated by wheelchair.

### Significant Factors/Conclusions

Mrs. Johnson was travelling in her motorized wheelchair on a four-lane busy road in a vehicle lane. She was struck by an oncoming vehicle and died from her injuries.

Sidewalks need to be free and clear of ice, snow, sand, and other debris to ensure accessibility for persons with mobility issues.

A vehicle lane is not purposed for travel by a motorized wheelchair. Motor vehicles pose a significant risk to persons in a wheelchair because they are travelling at a higher rate of speed with more force, impact and weight.

Reflective markings or flags should be used to make wheelchairs more visible to motorists, especially during times of limited daylight.

### Recommendations

No recommendations



Signature, Chief Coroner

Whitehorse, Yukon

Province/Territory

October 27, 2016

Date

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