



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

Department of Justice, Legal Services  
Yukon Coroners Service  
206C Lowe Street  
PO Box 2703 (J-10A)  
Y1A 2C6  
Whitehorse, YT  
Tel.: 867-667-5317 Fax.: 867-456-6826

Yukon Coroners Service: Judgement of Inquiry into the death of: Dylan Keith Alexis

Coroner Investigative File No.: 4520201359

Name: Dylan Keith Alexis Date of Birth: 1989/09/18 Date of Death: 2014/02/01

YYYY/MM/DD

YYYY/MM/DD

Address: Whitehorse, Yukon

Street Address

Province/Territory

Postal Code

Ethnic Origin: First Nations

Location of Death: Whitehorse General Hospital

## Cause of Death

Hypothermia due to Exposure to Cold Environment. Contributory Cause: Ethanol Intoxication

## Manner of Death

Accidental

## Autopsy Findings

A post mortem examination of Mr. Alexis was performed at Vancouver General Hospital on February 6, 2014 at 10:00am.

The autopsy revealed vacuolization of hepatocytes and renal tubular cells, consistent with changes secondary to hypothermia. There was no evidence of injury.

## Toxicological Findings

At autopsy, a vitreous sample was obtained and toxicology testing detected .04% alcohol.

### Circumstances of Death

On the evening of January 31, 2014, 24 year old Dylan Alexis was visiting with friends at a home in the Copper Ridge residential area of Whitehorse, Yukon. He was heavily consuming alcohol. At approximately 22:30hrs, Mr. Alexis left the home where the group was visiting. It was thought that he had walked to his residence which was not too far away.

Due to his state of intoxication, Mr. Alexis walked the opposite direction of his residence. He ended up several kilometers down a trail, in the middle of the night, at frigid temperatures, with clothing that was inappropriate to the conditions, and in a vulnerable state of intoxication. The scene showed that Mr. Alexis had rested (melting the snow with his body temperature) on three occasions for unknown periods of time. Mr. Alexis was not wearing his winter jacket. He was only wearing a hooded sweatshirt, jeans, socks, underwear, and running shoes.

At approximately 09:15hrs on February 1, 2014, two walkers found Mr. Alexis near the trail on the Maclean Lake Road.

He was rushed to Whitehorse General Hospital but was pronounced deceased at 14:25hrs on February 1, 2014.

### Significant Factors/Conclusions

Witnesses stated that Mr. Alexis was heavily intoxicated on the evening of January 31, 2014. Toxicology testing indicated that there was alcohol in Mr. Alexis' blood on admission to hospital.

Due to the normal metabolic processing and absorption of alcohol in the body, it can be assumed that the levels of alcohol in Mr. Alexis' blood from midnight to the early to mid-morning hours of February 1, 2014 were higher than what was detected in the antemortem and postmortem toxicology testing.

Mr. Alexis was exposed to the cold weather environment for approximately twelve hours. The weather in Whitehorse dipped to -16C with the wind chill factor. Mr. Alexis was not dressed properly for an extended period of time in the outdoors.

Mr. Alexis was suffering from hypothermia when he was found on the morning of February 1, 2014. On arrival to hospital, he was in hypothermic cardiac arrest and his body temperature was 25 degrees. The combination of alcohol consumption and cold weather is dangerous and can lead to death from hypothermia and exposure.

### Recommendations

Coroners' Note:

In February 2015 a recommendation was previously made to Yukon Liquor Corporation to "develop and implement an ongoing, annual social responsibility initiative which specifically addresses the dangers of consuming alcohol in a cold weather environment and which supports responsible consumption during the cold winter months."

*Macdonald*

Signature: Chief Coroner

*Whitehorse YT*

Province/Territory

*May 8/15*

Date

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