

Neate Inquiry

INCIDENT SCENARIO AND SUMMARY OF FACTS:

Name of deceased:	Jason Dean Neate
Date and time of death:	January 14, 2009 at 7:06 p.m.
Cause of death:	Sequelae of Drowning
Manner of death:	Accidental
Location:	Jamie Platz YMCA (Edmonton)



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®

The Lifeguarding Experts

ACTIVITY TAKING PLACE AT TIME OF INCIDENT:

On January 13, 2009 Jason Neate was swimming at the Jamie Platz YMCA Swimming Pool in Edmonton, Alberta. Jason entered the shallow end of the pool and then began swimming in a lane. The on-duty lifeguard positioned himself closer to the deep end where Jason and one other swimmer were swimming. When Jason went to the bottom of the pool, the on-duty lifeguard noticed Jason's arms stopped moving. The on-duty lifeguard estimated that Jason was at the bottom of the pool for 15 seconds before he dove in to rescue him. The on-duty lifeguard brought Jason to the surface and began emergency procedures. He covered Jason with blankets and continued monitoring Jason's breathing and pulse while he waited for the ambulance to arrive.

JUDICIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PREVENTION OF SIMILAR DEATHS:

Given the significant initiatives that the YMCA has undertaken since January 2009, the recommendations that this Inquiry may suggest to prevent similar deaths in the future are limited.

1. One recommendation for change involves a consolidation of manuals. It became apparent from a review of all the YMCA manuals entered as exhibits, that aside from the general confusion that can result from duplicity, some inconsistencies existed between them. I would strongly urge, and as was suggested by the Canadian Red Cross Society, that one consolidated manual for the aquatics staff be compiled. That manual would include everything that the aquatics staff would need to perform their job. An outline of suggested headings was included in the Canadian Red Cross Report dated September 22, 2011.
 - **Lifesaving Society Notes:** The Lifesaving Society endorses this recommendation. As the standard-setting certifying body for lifeguards in Canada, the Lifesaving Society has been providing resources for the development and use of Aquatic Staff Manuals since the 1990s. We include the "Aquatic Staff Manual" checklist in several training programs (i.e. Head Lifeguard and Aquatic Management Training) and the 2012 Safety and Supervision Toolkit (hard-copy and electronic).
2. Also, as suggested in the September 22, 2011 Canadian Red Cross Report as well as being noted in the Lifesaving Society Public Aquatic Facility Safety Standards manual, and also as referenced in the Lifesaving Society Lifeguard Positioning Analysis, it is strongly recommended that since lifeguarding is a vigilance task, a lifeguard should be assigned no other duties while supervising the pool deck. In addition, in order to keep a lifeguard alert and focused, a lifeguard should be required to take a minimum 15 minute break from supervising every 2 hours.

- **Lifesaving Society Notes:** The Lifesaving Society supports this recommendation. The Lifesaving Society Public Aquatic Facility Safety Standards have been published since 2001 and have given clear direction in regards to lifeguarding in terms of vigilance and maximum time on deck. The Society provides complimentary access to the Public Aquatic Facility Safety Standards through the website – www.lifesaving.org – and conducts Lifeguard Positioning Analysis for facilities on a request basis.

Vigilance (from the Public Aquatic Facility Standards)

Lifeguarding is a vigilance task. Every effort must be made to keep the lifeguard alert and focused on supervision. Regular rotation between stations and regular breaks from the vigilance task are required. If two (2) or more lifeguards are on duty on deck, they should rotate lifeguard stations every 15 - 30 minutes.

The Lifesaving Society recommends that lifeguards should be provided with a minimum 15 minute break from the supervision task every two (2) hours. During this break lifeguards may be required to perform other duties such as maintenance.

3. Since aquatics operations are complex and require continuous evaluation, it is recommended that an external audit be conducted on each facility no less than once every 2 to 3 years.
 - **Lifesaving Society Notes:** The Lifesaving Society supports this recommendation. The Lifesaving Society has provided Comprehensive Aquatic Safety Audits since the 1990s, and provides training and certification for Lifesaving Society Aquatic Safety Inspectors and Lifesaving Society Aquatic Safety Auditors. The Lifesaving Society recommends that all facilities conduct an annual Aquatic Safety Inspection as well as a Comprehensive Aquatic Safety Audit every 3-5 years.
4. It is recommended that additional signs be posted to remind patrons of the need to inform the lifeguards of any medical conditions. Such signs could be posted at the front entry near the Customer Service Desk with additional signs around the pool deck and inside the locker rooms.
 - **Lifesaving Society Notes:** The Lifesaving Society supports this recommendation and has included this under Safety Systems in the Lifesaving Society Public Aquatic Facility Safety Standards since the original 2001 publication.

For More Information or Support please contact the Lifesaving Society at 780-415-1755 or experts@lifesaving.org.