



# 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: James (Jim) Fowler

Coroner Investigative File No.: 45202014037

Name: James Reginald Fowler Date of Birth: 1941/03/28 Date of Death: 2014/11/16

YYYY/MM/DD

YYYY/MM/DD

Address: 92 Judas Creek Subdivision, Marsh Lake

Street Address

Province/Territory

Postal Code

Ethnic Origin: Caucasian

Location of Death: Marsh Lake

## Cause of Death

Effects of Cold Water Submersion due to Fall into Lake While Ice Skating

## Manner of Death

Accidental

## Autopsy Findings

No autopsy

## Toxicological Findings

Toxicology testing was performed on December 30, 2014 at British Columbia Provincial Toxicology Centre. Toxicology testing revealed a blood alcohol content of .12% which is consistent with a moderate level of intoxication.

### Circumstances of Death

On the afternoon of November 16, 2014 Mr. Fowler went out ice skating on Marsh Lake. The ice extended from the shore approximately 150 feet but there was still open water and the lake was not totally frozen. Mr. Fowler went back outside to ice skate at around 7:30pm. He was ice skating alone, and advised that he would be back in two hours. When Mr. Fowler still had not returned at 10:30pm there was concern for his well-being, and a search was initiated. The body of Mr. Fowler was located in Marsh Lake just after mid-night. The ice was noted to be very fragile, thin, and dangerous. There were skate marks visible at the edge of the ice, about 100 feet from shore. It remains unknown if Mr. Fowler skated off the edge of the ice or if the ice failed underneath him. Witnesses stated that in the afternoon of November 16, 2014 a large crack of the ice was heard. Based on these statements and weather patterns, it is believed that part of the ice may have cracked and broke off. Mr. Fowler had knowledge of the ice conditions from earlier that day. It is unknown whether or not he was aware of any potential change in ice conditions later that evening. When Mr. Fowler went skating after dinner that night, the only real illumination of the ice and water came from his head lamp. The moon was at approximately 30% and would have provided minimal additional illumination.

### Significant Factors/Conclusions

Due to weather conditions and witness statements, it is believed that there was a change in the ice conditions at Marsh Lake in the afternoon on November 16, 2014.

There was very little light by which a person could gauge the quality and thickness of the ice, any potential change in conditions, or increased level of danger.

Mr. Fowler was found to be moderately intoxicated with alcohol at the time of his death.

### Recommendations

No recommendations



Signature, Chief Coroner

Whitehorse, Yukon

Province/Territory

January 22/15

Date

**Print**

**Save**

**Clear**