

Authorities Investigate Case of Woman Dying After Water-Drinking Contest

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SACRAMENTO, Calif. — As participants in "KDND-FM's (www.endonline.com) Morning Rave 'Wee for Wii' Stunt" water-drinking contest chugged bottle after bottle, a listener called in to warn the disc jockeys that the stunt could be fatal. "Yeah, we're aware of that," one of them responded. Another DJ said with a laugh: "Yeah, they signed releases, so we're not responsible. We're OK." The audiotape of this contest as well as the deceased can be heard at: <http://www.radioearth.com/KDNDWaterIntox.html>

Those comments and others made during the Jan. 12 "Morning Rave" radio show appeared to give little regard to the risk of water intoxication. But just hours after the contest, a woman who guzzled nearly two gallons was dead. On Wednesday, the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department launched a criminal investigation into the incident, and attorneys for the family of Jennifer said they plan to file a wrongful death lawsuit against the radio station. The county coroner said preliminary autopsy findings indicate Strange, a 28-year-old mother of three, died of water intoxication.

Personal research conducted on the capacity of one's bladder revealed the following results: "When it is completely filled, the bladder can hold approximately 17 to 18 ounces (500 to 530 ml) of urine." (*Encyclopedia Americana - International Edition*. Danbury, CT: Grolier, 2001). "A completely full bladder is capable of holding approximately 1 liter of fluid ... Ordinarily the urge to urinate occurs when the bladder contains about 200 ml of urine." (*Magill's Medical Guide Volume III*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Salem, 1998) Additionally, it's almost impossible to give an exact measurement for the volume of the human bladder. That is, everyone's ability to hold a certain amount of urine differs. The point at which a person can't "hold it in" anymore and urine is expelled from the urinary bladder is known as Micturition. The urge to urinate is stimulated by expansion of the bladder. As the bladder walls fill with urine and expand, stretch receptors are stimulated and the Micturition reflex is triggered. The Micturition reflex center is located in the spinal cord. When it is signaled by impulses from the stretch receptors, motor impulses travel to a muscle in the urinary bladder which undergoes rhythmic contractions. It is interesting to note that the reason infants are unable to control the voluntary muscles associated with Micturition is because voluntary control of Micturition becomes possible as the brain and spinal cord mature. (<http://hypertextbook.com/facts/2001/DanielShaw.shtml>).

Authorities decided to pursue the investigation after listening to a tape of the show (web page above), obtained by The Sacramento Bee, during which DJs joked about the possible dangers of consuming too much water, sheriff's spokesman Sgt. Tim Curran said. At one point, the DJs even alluded to a college student who died during a similar stunt in 2005. Strange was one of about 18 contestants who tried to win a Nintendo Wii gaming console by determining how much water they could drink without going to the bathroom. Several hours into the contest, Strange was interviewed on the air and complained that her head hurt. "They keep telling me that it's the water. That it will tell my head to hurt and then it will make me puke," she said.

Eventually, Strange gave in and accepted the second-place prize: tickets to a Justin Timberlake concert. She commented that she looked pregnant, and a female DJ agreed. "Oh, my gosh, look at that belly. That's full of water. ... Come on over, Jennifer, you OK?" a male DJ asked. "You going to pass out right now? Too much water?" Several hours later, Strange was found dead in her home. On Tuesday, KDND's parent company, Entercom/Sacramento, fired 10 employees connected to the contest, including three morning disc jockeys. The company also took the morning show off the air. Station spokesman Charles Sipkins said Wednesday the company had not yet heard from the sheriff's department but that it would cooperate with the investigation.

1. In paragraph form, thoroughly explain and outline the rules of the contest, prizes involved, and the preliminary legal approach taken upon the part of the radio station to prevent a series of lawsuits.
2. Given the fact that one liter is equivalent to approximately 33.8140226 US fluid ounces coupled with the information found in *Encyclopedia Americana - International Edition* as well as *Magill's Medical Guide Volume III*, briefly explain the damage which occurred to Jennifer's interior organs.
3. By what percentage had Jennifer exceeded the capacity of her bladder? Assuming of course that all of the water she consumed was maintained in that one particular location?
4. Assuming all of the contestants were granted an equal opportunity to win, as a ratio expressed in simplest form, decimal, and percentage, explain Jennifer's chances of *NOT* winning first place.
5. What repercussions and disciplinary actions have taken place with employees directly related to the incident?
6. Considering all participants in the contest signed a legal hold-harmless agreement in advance, do you feel this legal binding contract should release the radio station employees from all legal responsibility? Explain.
7. On a separate sheet of paper, write a professional business letter to John Geary, Vice-President & General Manager, KDND 107.9 The End 5345 Madison Avenue Sacramento, California 95841 with your personal opinion of this competition, the aftermath, and repercussions stemming from it.
8. In the passage above, in paragraph form, explain at least five ways using the "Four-Step Reading" poster simplifies understanding of the material. Be specific.
9. After having created your own The Daughtry Times how has your perspective of this weekly assignment changed?
10. In complete sentences, using contextual clues only, explain the meaning of the italicized words: *deceased*, *intoxication*, *autopsy*, and *Micturition*. Additionally, use each in a sentence to demonstrate further comprehension. Basically, there are eight questions here.
11. In paragraph form, explain at least five legitimate and educational purposes behind The Daughtry Times.