

10-1 Age: 21 Gender: M

Immediate Cause of Death: Dry drowning

A diver and buddy planned a dive under ice in a freshwater lake. The decedent was to wait under the hole for his buddy to secure a safety line. When the buddy could not locate the decedent he called EMS after attempting a 25min search. He was located and pronounced dead several hours later, according to his computer his tank still had 600psi of air pressure.

Both divers were inexperienced and had no formal training in ice diving. They both completed their basic certification 7 months previous and had not been diving since. The two men had decided to go ice diving the previous day. Research comprised of internet instruction for under ice scuba diving.

They had purchased all their own diving equipment and the decedent had purchased an air compressor for filling tanks. The decedent diving equipment was sent to the Canadian Coast Guard for a complete inspection. "The overall condition and configuration of the examined equipment was adequate. The breathing performance of the primary 2nd stage regulator had a continuous low free flow when tested in the as found condition..."

Coroner's Recommendations: None

10-2

Age: Unknown Gender: F

Cause of Death: Suspected Drowning

Little information is known about a female diver diving with a group of divers. The diver failed to surface from the dive and a search by air and sea was immediately conducted. The divers body was recovered the next day by search and rescue. The diver had been diving in an area known for its drift diving.

No Corners Report.

10-3

Age: 37 Gender:M

Cause of Death: Air Embolism and Drowning

The decedent was diving with a buddy on a night dive at a dive site known to be a "wall dive". The two men had planned on collecting prawns and due to that theirs was a night dive, safety precautions were established where a friend stood by to monitor and aid with their return. They remained close together as they collect prawns at an estimated 60ft, the more experienced dive buddy motioned to level off. The two continued to collect prawns and after approximately 25 minutes underwater, the dive buddy noticed they had dropped to a depth of 84ft. The buddy signaled that they were too deep and pointed to his own depth gauge.

At this point the decedent was in charge of the buddy's spear gun. According to the dive buddy, he turned to reach for a prawn, then turned back to observe the decedent swimming away from him, rapidly descending and shining his light around. The buddy caught him at a depth of approximately 115ft and attempted to stop him by signaling that they were too deep, which at this time he realized the decedent had dropped the spear gun. The buddy attempted to stop the decedent knowing he was low on air, point at his tank and up. Low on air the dive buddy stopped physically attempting to halt the decedent and began to ascend. It is the dive buddy's opinion that the decedent was single minded in his desire to retrieve the spear gun.

When the dive buddy reached the surface, he saw the decedent's headlight and heard him calling for help. When the buddy reached him, he was unconscious, and his face was in the water. There was no regulator in his mouth and no air in his tank. The buddy pulled the decedent to the shoreline, and the Coast Guard vessel arrived. The EMS applied emergency treatment for close to thirty minutes before pronouncing him deceased.

The decedent was believed to be a novice diver with completing his certification the previous year. The dive buddy believes the deepest dive was approximately 50 feet.

The diving gear made up of rental equipment and personal equipment was sent to the Canadian Coast Guard for examination with the overall condition to be adequate. The *Dacor* pressure gauge and console however, revealed a loose screw inside the face of the gauge. When tested there were times when it interfered with the gauge's needle moving freely over the face. If this happened during the dive it might have indicated more breathing gas than physically available. According to the CCG, there has never been a recall of this *Dacor* product. The company is no longer in existence.

Corners reconditions: None

10-4

Age: 46 Gender: F

Cause of Death: Suspected Drowning

The decedent and dive buddy were diving at a dive site popular to divers and a place where new local divers are trained. Little information has been released but at some point towards the end of the dive the decedent ran out of air and performed an alternate air source ascent with her buddy. At some point on or near the surface the decedent and buddy lost contact with each other and the decedent sank underwater. A rescue was immediately activated and a search was conducted by nearby divers. The decedent's body was recovered approximately 15 minutes later at approximately 50ft by divers and taken to the surface. It was noted that the divers regulator was not in her mouth and weight belt was still in place. The Coast Guard arrived on scene within minutes and was able to restore some vital signs. The decedent remained in hospital for approximately one week before being pronounced dead.

10-2

Age: 52 Gender: F

Cause of Death: Drowning

The decedent was diving from a boat with a group of three other divers and a boat operator. The decedent was said to be an experienced diver and three out of the four divers were dive instructors.

The divers had planned on doing a drift dive from a "live" boat. The current was relatively strong that day and visibility was approximately 10-20 feet. At the Beginning of the dive the decedent seemed to be doing well, pointing out marine life to her dive buddy. As the current pushed the decedent's dive buddy apart they lost visual contact. At this point the other buddy team reported seeing the decedent holding on to a boulder slightly behind the group. They considered this to be unusual as it would be unlikely that the decedent would be holding on to an object unless she was having a problem.

The two other divers surfaced early as they had been experiencing ear problems. The decedent's buddy had been pushed into a bay by the current as planned and settled to the bottom to regroup. After several minutes of waiting the buddy surfaced and returned to the boat.

The group estimated that the decedent should have 20 - 30 minutes of air remaining. After several minutes they spotted surface bubbles and moved the boat into the area. They felt that the decedent was continuing her dive to burn off her remaining air supply. As the group became concerned that the decedent was reaching her air supply limit the buddy re-entered the water for a 15 minute U-pattern search. Unsuccessful, they alerted the Coast Guard and a sea and air search was initiated. The Diver's body was recovered the next day at 61ft. The decedent had no air remaining in her tank, and her weight system was still attached.

The diver's gear was sent to the Coast Guard for inspection. It was found to be in good condition and passed all testing. The tank however had a leak from the valve control knob and when disassembled indicated signs of improper maintenance. The tank, supplied by the operator, failed inspection and would not have been safe for diving. It is possible with this leak that the decedent used up more air than anticipated.

The decedent weight system also was considered to be in contradiction to the best diving practices. It was a harness system using a three buckle arrangement which may have compromised a quick release. With its configuration, it is possible in an emergency the decedent may have had trouble removing her weight system. Autopsy showed significant fluid accumulating in the lungs.