

Police Probe Death After Radio Contest
By JULIET WILLIAMS – AP

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (Jan. 18, 2007) - As participants in KDND-FM's 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."

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 Lea Strange 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.

Authorities decided to pursue the investigation after listening to a tape of the show, 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.

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1. What motivated someone to participate in this contest? Explain.
2. What motivated the radio station to offer such types on contests? Explain.
3. Explain how each of the theories of motivation (evolutionary, drive, arousal, cognitive, humanistic) explain the contestant's behavior.
4. Which one best fits and why?
5. What principles of motivation theory could discourage this kind of behavior? Explain.