

Mexican resort unprepared, says sister of teen killed in accident

Camila Lopez of Kitchener, Ont., died after being struck by personal watercraft

By Matthew Kang, [CBC News](#)

Posted: Jul 3, 2013 6:59 PM ET

Last Updated: Jul 3, 2013 8:03 PM ET

The sister of a Kitchener, Ont., teen who died while on vacation in Mexico after being struck by a personal watercraft says the response by hotel staff and local paramedics was inadequate to deal with a medical emergency.

Camila Lopez, 16, was in a kayak that was struck by a water scooter piloted by a 16-year-old boy from the U.K. early Saturday afternoon, said her older sister, Pilar Lopez, 28.

She believes her sister died from internal injuries before she was pulled to shore.

- [How friends of Camila Lopez are remembering her](#)

Once on shore, Camila was attended to by a doctor from the resort — the Now Jade Riviera Cancun resort in Puerto Morelos, about 40 minutes from Cancun — where she was staying with her family. Her sister said the doctor did not seem to know what she was doing when she attempted to give emergency care.

“She was pushing down on Camila’s shoulder to try and give CPR, rather than on her chest or abdomen,” Lopez said.

Lopez said three Americans who were medical professionals were at the scene and attempted to perform CPR. She said one of them, a nurse, noted that the hotel’s defibrillator was past its expiry date and its two oxygen tanks were not full.

“The nurse told me one of them was completely empty and the second only had 1,000 litres, which she said is less than half empty,” Lopez said.

She said it took 40 minutes for an ambulance to arrive on scene. CBC News tried repeatedly to contact the hotel for comment, but did not receive any response from staff.

The personal watercraft that struck and killed Camila was not supposed to be in the area where the girl was kayaking, Lopez said. She told CBC News she has heard the U.K. teen involved in the crash was held in police custody for two days and later placed in another hotel. Mexican authorities have not allowed him to leave the country.

Minimal assistance from Canadian government

In a statement to CBC News about the incident, a spokeswoman from the Department Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development said, “Our thoughts are with the friends and family of a Canadian

citizen who passed away in Mexico. Canadian officials are in contact with local authorities and are providing consular assistance to the family.”

Emma Welford added that she could not comment on specific details of the case in order to "protect the privacy of the individual concerned."

Lopez said her family has had "very little help” from DFAIT or the Canadian Consulate in Cancun. Her husband and parents are also in Mexico.

“The only thing DFAIT said they could provide us with was a list of lawyers in Mexico,” she said.

As for medical expenses and funeral home costs, Lopez said her family has had to pay for all of it themselves.

The resort where they are staying has offered the family free transportation to the funeral home and free international and local calling, but has denied any responsibility for the incident.

Lopez said her family members fear they are being watched by hotel staff, and that their phone calls are being monitored.

They plan to be back in Canada by Friday, and are aiming to have Camila’s funeral in Kitchener on Sunday.

St. Mary’s High School in Kitchener, where Camila was a student, plans to have a memorial in September when students return for classes.

With files from The Canadian Press

Comments on this story are pre-moderated. Before they appear, comments are reviewed by moderators to ensure they meet our [submission guidelines](#). Comments are open and welcome for three days after the story is published. We reserve the right to close comments before then.

[Login](#) | [Sign up](#)

67 Comments

Commenting is Closed

Follow

Newest 



marnucals

Please! to pay travel and travel insurance that covers everything. The government of Canada has nothing to do with your trip. In addition, the first press reports were erroneous. They said that, it was a Colombian family and the girl born in Villavicencio Colombia. Nowhere is it stated that they were Canadian. Sorry for your loss. but the Canadian government has nothing to do with this.

19 days ago 0 Likes

[Like](#) [Share](#)

bluenoser55



I've been going to Mexico since 1983, I had a stroke whilst in a remote area. I had medical insurance and was whisked out of there quickly to a hospital in Cancun. I was treated properly, expertly and with respect and made a 100% recovery.

I've been to many resorts in that area and I would not have confidence in their medical equipment or care.

There is lots of fault to go around; Mexican Government should properly train paramedics, Now Jade should make sure that their medical equipment ... » more

20 days ago 0 Likes

[Like](#) [Share](#)



SKRush

This is absolutely a tragedy. However, a couple of things stand out.

One - it seems prudent that the U.K. teen has not been allowed to leave the country. If he was using the personal watercraft in an area he had been told it was not allowed to be, there should be an investigation ongoing. He likely wouldn't be allowed to leave Canada in the same situation. And perhaps he was moved to another hotel because while he isn't under arrest, staff and officials thought there might be some tensions ...

» more

20 days ago 2 Likes

[Like](#) [Share](#)



DaveSmith

@SKRush Recent incidents lead me to suspect that if that kid had been Canadian and the Mexican authorities were holding him, a lot of people back here would be screaming for his immediate release and repatriation.

19 days ago 0 Likes

[Like](#) [Share](#)



white tulips

My heart goes out to the family very tragic. this could have happened in Canada. Many report places are far from medical facilities. . Besides "sounds" like the girl was already dead when she was brought to shore. Unfortunately it is not the governments responsibility to cover people for financial cost when they fail to buy the needed insurance for holidays abroad

20 days ago 1 Like

[Like](#) [Share](#)



Mr. Lo Key

Tragedies can happen anywhere.

You also cannot expect to find the same level of medical response as you do at home (it may be worse, it may be better).

But where does "...ss for medical expenses and funeral home costs, Lopez said her family has had to pay for all of it themselves..." come from? Who else would pay for this?

Rest in peace Camila.

20 days ago 1 Like

[Like](#) [Share](#)



Steve LeDuke

I think the Mexican authorities were absolutely right to detain the driver of the personal watercraft. Those things are dangerous in the wrong hands, especially for someone who is barely old enough to drive a car. With the right training and certification, personal watercraft can be fun and thrilling, but in the wrong hands, in this case, they can be dangerous and deadly. The Canadian Coast Guard is doing the right thing in terms of requiring all PWC drivers to be of a certain age and having ... » more

20 days ago 3 Likes

[Like](#) [Share](#)



jimbojones1983

This is why I will never go to Mexico.

20 days ago 1 Like

[Like](#) [Share](#)



JeebusMcGee

@jimbojones1983 16 year olds on water scooters can be found in many countries...

20 days ago 0 Likes

[Like](#) [Share](#)



jimbojones1983

@JeebusMcGee you are correct, however, resorts and doctors unprepared to deal with an emergency situation after a 16 year old runs somebody over with said water scooter are not. not to mention out of control drug cartels.

19 days ago 0 Likes

[Like](#) [Share](#)



mia1965

"As for medical expenses and funeral home costs, Lopez said her family has had to pay for all of it themselves."

Did they actually expect the government to pay for this? What exactly did they expect from the consulate that they feel they received 'very little help?'

Previous article have made this statement before as well and yet no one is ever asked exactly what it is they expect> Had the poor girl died in an accident at home ... » more

20 days ago 5 Likes

[Like](#) [Share](#)



Valencia

@mia1965 the government does pay if it were to of happened here.

20 days ago 0 Likes

[Like](#) [Share](#)

Mary Foster



I love adventure and I'm elderly. If I need to mortgage my house to pay medical bills, so be it. My kids don't have to inherit anything. You take your chances when traveling abroad. Sad for the 16 year old, way too young. Her parents should have warned her about the perils of traveling abroad. This type of accident can happen right here in cottage country. You can't live in a bubble.

20 days ago 4 Likes

[Like](#) [Share](#)



Muggsy

Been to Mexico and saw their response at the resort to a man who hit his head on the bottom of the pool. Blood all over/man unconscious. Ambulance slow....hotel just wanted to ignore situation and sweep it under the carpet. Will never go to Mexico again!

20 days ago 3 Likes

[Like](#) [Share](#)

[Show More](#)

[Submission Policy](#)

Note: The CBC does not necessarily endorse any of the views posted. By submitting your comments, you acknowledge that CBC has the right to reproduce, broadcast and publicize those comments or any part thereof in any manner whatsoever. Please note that comments are moderated and published according to our [submission guidelines](#).