

newMexico wedding proceeds despite drowning

Edmonton-area bride's father swept into ocean on Monday

[CBC News](#)

Posted: Jul 21, 2011 2:22 PM MT

Last Updated: Jul 21, 2011 2:22 PM MT



Map data ©2012 Google, INEGI An Alberta man drowned off Mexico coast.

A young Edmonton-area bride whose father drowned this week off the coast of Mexico will proceed with her wedding Thursday, under a cloud of tragedy.

Robert "Dale" Clack, 51, of Stony Plain, was swept by a current into the ocean on Monday while vacationing with his family on only the second day of their summer holiday at San Jose de Cabo on the Baja California peninsula.

"It went from a fun time to a tragic horrible accident," said Fred Fudger, a family friend.

The single father was standing in waist-deep water with his 15-year-old son, Dakota, when a wave swept him into deeper water. He called to his son, who jumped in to help him.

Clack had a shoulder injury that made it difficult for him to swim.

Fudger said the pair's last moments together were heartbreaking as both struggled to survive. Clack finally instructed his son to save himself, he said.

"He actually grabbed Dakota's arm from around his neck, and released him from him, and said, 'I love you, son. Go get help.'"

'The family came together down there and decided Dale would have still wanted his daughter to get married.'

—Fred Fudger, friend of drowning victim

Father would've wanted wedding to go on

Dakota spent almost an hour trying to swim back to shore, at one time almost giving up himself.

No

Drag this to your Windows taskbar to enable special IE9 Features.

By the time Dakota reached shore and began screaming for help, it was too late for his dad. The Mexican Navy, lifeguards and firefighters assisted in the search for Clack's body, [recovering it on Wednesday](#).

"He's not a really big kid," said Fudger. "It must have been a struggle for him. Nobody could imagine what that would be like."

The teen found his girlfriend, who is Fudger's daughter, and told her what happened to his father.

"They were on the beach when they made the call to my wife," said Fudger. "I guess they were screaming hysterically. At that point we didn't know what was going on until they called back later."

Fudger said the teen is distraught and still blaming himself.

"We've all consoled him and told him he's a hero. He did the best he could."

Fudger said the decision for Clack's daughter to go ahead with her beach wedding as planned was difficult, but believed it was what Clack would have wanted. The bride's father had saved up for a year to attend his daughter's wedding.

"The family came together down there and decided Dale would have still wanted his daughter to get married," Fudger said. "So they're going to still have the wedding. I guess, they felt otherwise he would've died in vain."

Clack was a big-hearted man, said Fudger. The two families became instant friends when Dakota began dating Fudger's daughter, he said.

"You couldn't ask for a nicer guy."

The family will return home to Edmonton with Clack's ashes.

Fudger hoping Dakota will agree to live with his family in Stony Plain.



Drag this to your Windows taskbar to enable special IE9 Features.

