

NEWS

Kansas mother, two small children die in boating accident at Burlington; father injured

**Tim Hrenchir**

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A Kansas mother and her two sons, ages 2 and 5, died late Saturday after their boat stalled in rapid water in the Neosho River near the city dam on the east side of Burlington, about 60 miles south of Topeka.

The children's father was injured but survived.

That man, identified as Wesley Sharp, of Shawnee in Johnson County, was rescued and taken to Burlington Hospital, where he was in stable condition, said Maj. David Simonetti, of the Law Enforcement Division of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism.

Pronounced deceased at Burlington Hospital were the woman, Maribel Moran, and the couple's two children, Simonetti said in a news release posted on the Facebook site of the Coffey County Sheriff's Office.

KDWPT was continuing to investigate circumstances of the accident, including whether those involved were wearing life jackets, Simonetti told The Capital-Journal on Monday.

Authorities were called about 6:30 p.m. Saturday to the scene, Simonetti said

"The preliminary investigation revealed that a family of two adults and two children were boating on the river," he said. "As the boat approached the low-head dam, it stalled in rapid, aerated water, at which point the operator lost control of the vessel and all occupants were ejected."

Aeration is the process of increasing or maintaining the oxygen saturation of water in both natural and artificial environments. Aeration techniques are commonly used in management

of bodies of water to address low oxygen levels or algae blooms.

Saturday's accident came five years and two days after Michael "Mike" Myers, 53, of Burlington, drowned when the small boat he and another man were in capsized on the Neosho River near the Burlington City Dam. The other man survived.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism was continue to investigating circumstances of Saturday's accident. Anyone with information about it is asked to call KDWPT game warden Blake Stromgren at 785-207-3151.