

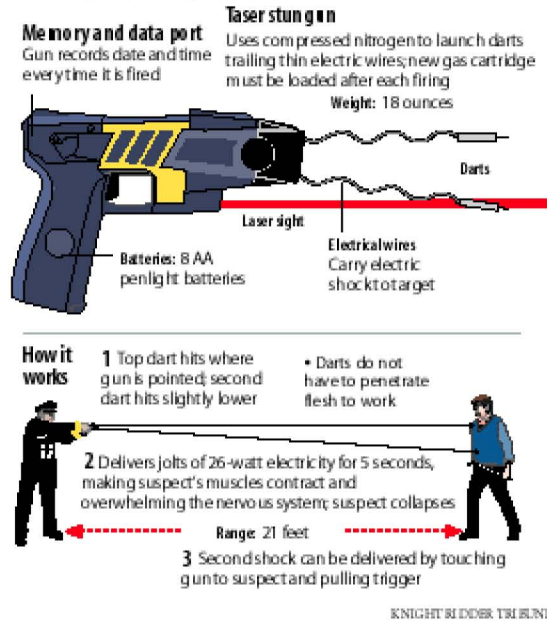
# Orlando Sentinel

## Man dies after he's hit with stun gun

By Pamela J. Johnson | Sentinel Staff Writer  
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### HOW A STUNGUN WORKS

Law-enforcement agencies are increasingly turning to stun guns to deal with suspects who resist arrest. The weapons inflict 50,000 volts of electricity, temporarily incapacitating the suspect.



A Windermere man has died after an Orange County deputy shot him a dozen times with a Taser electrical gun, but authorities said the series of shocks is probably not responsible for his death.

Deputies found half of a Maxidone pill in one of the pockets of Gordon Randall "Randy" Jones, 37. The unemployed electrician died on the way to a hospital Friday night.

They think an overdose of the highly addictive prescription painkiller may have killed him. An autopsy that would determine his cause of death was not complete Monday.

He started using cocaine as a young man, said his sister, Sherry Jones of St. Cloud. Jones lived with his sister until recently, when she kicked him out because of his drug use. She was outraged that deputies shot her brother with a Taser gun so many times.

"They Tasered him way too much," Jones said Monday. "My brother didn't do anything but disobey their command to leave the lobby."

Typically, officers use two or three shots to subdue a suspect, said Steve Tuttle of Taser International Inc., the Arizona company that manufactures the devices. The death in January of a 31-year-old homeless man in South

Florida was originally linked to Taser use, but later he was determined to have died of a cocaine overdose.

In this latest case, authorities say Jones was kicking and flailing his arms so violently in the lobby of the Rosen Plaza Hotel that he needed the dozen electrical shocks to subdue him.

### High voltage

Each Taser shot unleashes a 50,000-volt, five-second jolt through a person's body, temporarily immobilizing the muscles. A Taser shoots two tiny barbs attached to wires, which can travel as far as 21 feet.

Jones' death was the first following Taser use since the device was introduced to the department in December 2000. Deputies have used the Taser during 409 arrests since then with no major injuries. By the year's end, 400 Orange County deputies will be armed with Tasers.

Cmdr. Angelo Nieves said that the department spent about \$266,000 for the 400 Tasers and equipment designed to prevent injuries to officers and suspects. With Tasers, deputies can avoid going hands-on with uncontrollable suspects, he said. Injuries from other nonlethal weapons, such as batons or pepper spray, can be more harmful.

Usually, the Taser victim gets only skin irritation and abrasions, said Sgt. Paul Hopkins, who runs the deputy Taser training. He said it usually takes two shots to subdue a suspect.

"The benefit of this weapon is to create distance," said Hopkins, referring to the up to 21-foot span between the deputy and suspect. "It is a very good tool to stop a bad guy."

"Everything indicates that the officers acted appropriately in this case," Nieves said. "It's unfortunate that he died."

Jones wanted to check himself into a drug rehabilitation center, his sister said. But when their mother suddenly died of a stroke about two months ago, Jones stepped up his drug use.

### Pricey hotels

After his sister ordered him out, he used the money his mother left to him in her will to stay at expensive hotels. His father was senior professional golfer Gordon Jones, who died five years ago, his sister said.

He was staying at a Sheraton hotel on Apopka-Vineland Road, where he ran up a \$500 bar bill Friday afternoon, Sherry Jones said. She said her brother called her at 3:45 p.m. Friday and asked her to pick him up. Tired of his drug use, she said no.

"He sounded scared, like he was going through a state of paranoia," she said. "His last words to me were, 'I hope I see you again.' I should have gone to pick him up.' "

He went to the Rosen Plaza Hotel on International Drive and got a \$110 room. Then he headed to the bar.

Shortly after 9 p.m., he stumbled to the lobby, where he appeared drunk and refused requests by hotel clerks to leave. When deputies arrived, Jones had dumped the clothes from his duffel bag onto a table. Deputies told him to pick up his clothes.

"You do it," he told deputies.

When he refused to leave, Sgt. Martin Premo and deputies Don Compton and Chris Marcus tried to arrest him, according to an incident report. When he tried to pull away from deputies, Compton used his Taser. Jones rolled onto his back and began kicking and swinging his arms, according to the report. Compton fired his Taser nine more times.

### **'Don't make me love you'**

Jones still resisted, the report said, and kept mumbling, "Don't make me love you."

"It took two to three more activations of the Taser before we were able to get the handcuffs placed on Jones," Premo wrote in the report.

Afterward, Jones walked with deputies to an ambulance, the report said. He was strapped to a gurney and died on the way to Sand Lake Hospital. He was pronounced dead at the hospital shortly before midnight.

Sherry Jones said that two weeks ago deputies tried to arrest her brother after he got into a car accident. He told his sister that deputies used a Taser gun then to subdue him. He was taken to a hospital, instead of jail.

"For two weeks, he complained about his heart," Sherry Jones said. "He said, 'It hurts so bad, it feels like it's going to burst.' "

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## **Central Florida man dies after deputy shoots him with taser gun**

**ORLANDO, Fla.** - A 37-year-old man died after a deputy shot him a dozen times with a taser gun, officials said.

Gordon Randall "Randy" Jones, of Windermere, died Friday on his way to the hospital.

Orange County deputies said Monday they believe Jones overdosed on Maxidone, a prescription painkiller that was found in his pocket. An autopsy was not complete Monday.

Deputies said Jones refused their order to leave a hotel lobby and began kicking and flailing his arms so violently that a dozen electrical shocks were needed to restrain him in handcuffs.

Jones had checked into the Rosen Plaza Hotel, but dumped his duffel bag of clothes out in the lobby after drinking in the hotel bar.

Sgt. Martin Premo, and deputies Don Compton and Chris Marcus tried to arrest him, according to sheriff's reports. Compton fired the taser.

Usually two or three shocks will subdue a suspect, said Steve Tuttle of Taser International Inc. Taser guns fire projectile darts, connected to the weapon by wires, that jolt suspects with an electric charge and renders them immobile, usually without any long-term harm.

"They tasered him way too much," said Jones' sister, Sherry Jones. "My brother didn't do anything but disobey their command to leave the lobby."

She said Jones had lived in hotels after she recently asked him to leave her St. Cloud house because of his drug use. Her brother had been shot with a taser during an arrest earlier this month after a car accident and complained of heart pains since, she said.

Gordon Jones had previously been charged with possession of drugs, battery and resisting an officer.

A man in Hollywood and a man in Nassau County also died this year after they were shot by taser guns, but authorities later ruled they died of drug overdoses.

Information from: The Orlando Sentinel



## Suspect dies after stun gun episode

July 23, 2002

ORLANDO, FLORIDA -- A Windermere man has died after a deputy shot him a dozen times with a Taser electrical gun, but Orange County authorities said the shocks probably did not kill him.

Deputies found half of a Maxidone pill in one of the pockets of Gordon Randall Jones, 37, a drug user. Jones, an unemployed electrician, died en route to a hospital Friday night.

Authorities suspect an overdose of the addictive prescription painkiller killed him. An autopsy was under way Monday.

Typically, only two or three shots are needed to subdue a suspect, according to Taser International Inc., maker of the devices. Authorities said Jones was so violent that he needed the dozen electrical shocks to subdue him during a bar fracas.