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Federal Court Jury Awards 6.2 Million Dollars in TASER-Related Death

A Federal Court Jury returned a verdict late Friday in the amount of \$6,221,000.00 against TASER International Inc., for the wrongful death of a 40-year-old Salinas, California, man.

San Jose, CA ([PRWEB](#)) June 8, 2008 -- A Federal Jury returned a verdict late Friday afternoon in the amount of \$6,221,000.00 against TASER International Inc., for the wrongful death of a 40-year-old Salinas, California, man, who died following repeated shocks from three TASER electronic control devices ("ECDs").

The jury of five women and two men found that TASER International knew or should have known that its M26 model ECD was dangerous because prolonged exposures to the device pose a substantial risk of cardiac arrest to persons against whom the device is deployed. The jury also found that TASER International failed to adequately warn purchasers of its device of the risks associated with its use. It awarded the parents of Robert Heston \$1,000,000 in compensatory damages and \$5,000,000.00 in punitive damages. The jury also awarded Heston's estate \$21,000.00 in compensatory damages and another \$200,000.00 in punitive damages. However, it also found Robert Heston 85% comparatively negligent for the incident which ultimately resulted in his death. Only the compensatory damage award will be reduced by his percentage of comparative negligence.

On February 19, 2005, Robert C. Heston began acting erratically inside his family's Salinas, California home. Believing his son might be under the influence of drugs, Heston's father called the police reporting his son's bizarre behavior and asked them for help in removing his son from the home. Officers from the Salinas Police Department responded to the Heston home and confronted Mr. Heston. Three police officers used their TASER ECDs repeatedly subjecting Mr. Heston to nearly 75 seconds of continuous TASER discharges as other officers attempted to handcuff Heston on the living room floor. While being subjected to the TASER discharges, Heston suffered a cardiac arrest causing irreversible brain damage. He was removed from life support the following day and died shortly thereafter.

In their lawsuit, Heston v. City of Salinas, et al., N.D. Cal. Case No. C 05-03658 JW, Heston's parents alleged that TASER ECDs are unreasonably dangerous and defective for use on human beings because they are sold without adequate testing and without sufficient warning about the effect of multiple shocks for extended durations, particularly on people who are under the influence of drugs. They further claimed that the weapon, when used repeatedly, causes cardiac arrests and unnecessary deaths.



Contact Information

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✉ **Email Charly at:** c-d-miller@neb.rr.com

Those are hyphens (dashes) between the “c” and “d” and “miller”