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Lightning makes woman two-time target

BY LISA QUEEN
 Staff Writer

Don't try telling Newmarket's Leslie Roth that lightning never strikes twice.

The 45-year-old woman walked away with just a splitting headache after being "hit" by lightning twice within a minute while on a kayaking trip in Northern Ontario Saturday afternoon.

Roth, who is now away at a cottage with her family, wasn't talking about her ordeal yesterday.

But Rudy Massimo, executive director of Canadian Outward Bound Wilderness School that ran the course, said she wasn't hit directly by lightning on either occasion.

"A person who was hit twice by light-

ning would be in the Guinness Book of World Records. A direct hit, she would have a hole right through her or all her hair would be gone," he said.

"There were no direct hits. Period. They were ground strikes. A ground strike is like if it hits five feet away. It's hot. You'll feel a bit of a shock. But it's very different than a direct hit — very few people survive a direct hit."

Roth was on the last day of a kayaking leadership course with the school in Killarney near Manitoulin Island when the group saw thunderclouds roll in about 4 p.m.

Realizing the storm was serious, Massimo said the kayakers "assumed lightning position" on Phillip Edward Island at the mouth of Collins Inlet.

That involves sitting on their life jackets, which insulate them from any electrical current in the ground caused by lightning.

The members sit apart from one another — to lessen the chance of being struck — away from any trees or objects that attract lightning.

Roth was knocked unconscious by the first bolt hitting the ground. Massimo speculated a part of her body, such as a toe or a foot, wasn't on the life jacket when the lightning struck.

When one of the leaders called her name, Roth didn't answer.

She regained consciousness within moments, only to have another ground strike hit seconds later. She remained conscious the second time.

To be on the safe side, two kayakers headed for help, although it took a while to reach a telephone in the remote area.

OPP Const. Dean Brownlee managed to get to the group at about 8 p.m., about four hours after Roth was struck.

Brownlee, who accompanied the coast guard in to rescue Roth, said the woman appeared fine after her ordeal.

"She was walking and talking," he said. "She's a lucky lady. Pretty much after she came to (after the first strike), she was struck again."

Roth was airlifted to Sudbury Regional Hospital, where she was treated for minor injuries and released.

"She was surprised to see a helicopter land (on the island)," said Brownlee.

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Well-water users in York told to boil their water

From page 1.

King Cole Ducks general manager Rob Grant said no contamination was found on the property.

"Our water's fine. Our wells are tested regularly. Our product's perfectly safe," he said, adding regular inspections by the ministry and Canadian Food Inspection Agency would have found any possible contamination. "They find something, they shut you down."

Grant said King Cole Ducks, which requires a ministry permit as a water-user, did take part in a recent test; however, to see if the plant was affecting water levels for nearby homes.

The Beacon Hall Golf Club, also on the list, has a well used strictly for irrigation that is not connected to its regular water supply, general manager Joe Coleman said.

"It's never posed a threat to anything living," he said, adding the ministry has known since at least 1988 the well receives harmful leachate from an old dumpsite nearby.

The club and the Town of Aurora received scores of calls because of the article. "It's absolutely incredible what it has done," said Peter Horvath, Aurora's municipal water and sewer supervisor.

The Vellore School and Vellore Hall, Vaughan Township's original township hall, made the list because a well for the Weston Road historical buildings tested positive last month for harmful bacteria.

But the City of Vaughan, which houses a theatre arts day camp on the prop-

erties, has prevented any human exposure by using bottled water and portable toilets. It decided to hook the buildings up to the municipal system, city spokesperson Victoria Laskie said. Last month, positive tests for bacteria were made in Park Avenue Public School in Holland Landing, St. Patrick Catholic Elementary in Schomberg and St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School in Aurora, but in each case the problems turned out to be localized.

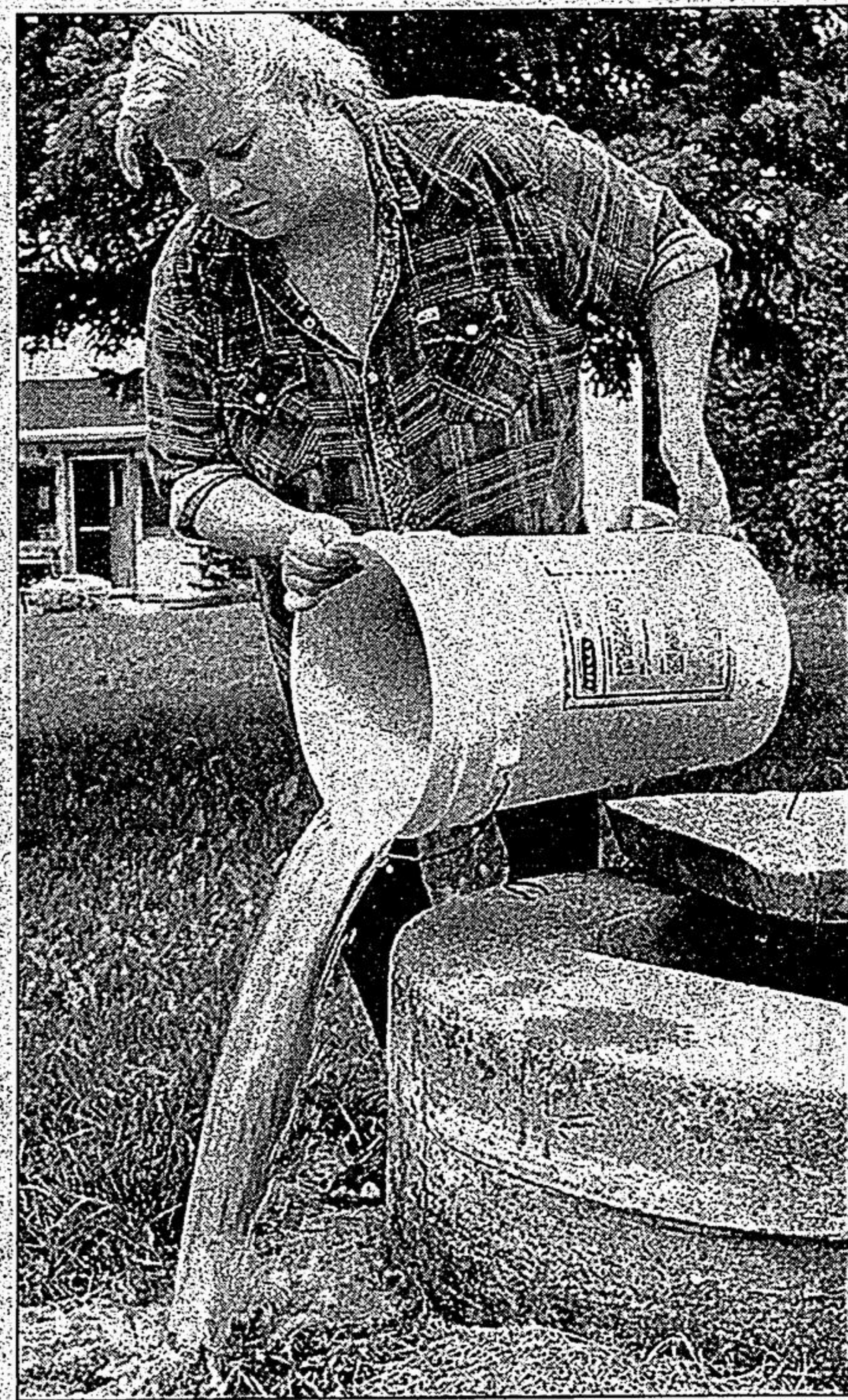
The region also said a test can be contaminated by the method used to get it. "Re-testing most often reveals that bacteria found within an original sample was the result of the testing method itself," its release stated.

Last month, 70 of 106 samples taken by a construction company in Markham's east-end hamlet of Box Grove indicated well water that may not be safe.

Kelly Hatton, a 14th Avenue provincial tenant, figures she and her family have lived with contaminated well water since mid-June.

The Hattons have bought an \$800 tank of water rather than shower or cook with their well supply.

"Yesterday, it looked like mud," Hatton said, pouring out a bucket her husband had filled. Del, which told the Hattons not to drink the water or cook with it without boiling it first, has promised to disinfect the water but hasn't so far, she said. The region urged private well owners to test their wells or call 1-800-361-5653 for information.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEN

Markham resident Kelly Hatton dumps contaminated water from her 14th Avenue well yesterday. Hatton has water trucked into her home after her well water was declared unfit to drink.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR DEPRESSION RESEARCH
 We are currently conducting a study of a new investigational medication treatment for depression. The purpose of the study is to further our knowledge about the treatment of depression. Treatment duration is 8 weeks and includes a physical exam, blood tests, electrocardiograms and a psychiatric interview. All information provided will be treated with strictest confidence. To volunteer, you must be 18-65 years of age, not currently in psychiatric treatment (unless you are being referred by your doctor), have no significant drug or alcohol problems and be in generally good health. To be evaluated for this program, please contact Dr. Steve Stökl's office (Psychiatrist) on Mon. July 17, 9am to 4pm or 7pm to 10pm & July 18-21, 9am to 2pm or Mon. July 24, 9am to 4pm or 7pm to 10pm & July 25-28 9am to 2pm to qualify for entrance into the study. This Psychiatric location is one of over 70 centres in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico involved in this medical/scientific research study.
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Fashion store loses \$70,000 in fraud
 A 40-year-old victim complained to police he was defrauded of more than \$70,000 a year and a half ago.
 The man said someone purchased \$74,000 of items from the Fashion Club on Ferrier Street in Markham on Jan. 25, 1999.
 He later learned the purchases had been made fraudulently.
Store robbery
 Thieves broke into the Daisy Mart convenience store on Hillcroft Drive in Markham last Wednesday by cutting a hole through the wall of an adjoining shop.
 They stole \$9,000-worth of lottery tickets, cigarettes and money.