

# Philly M.E. (Medical Examiner) Rules on Man's Death

By Associated Press

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PHILADELPHIA -- The death of a man who police tried to subdue with a stun gun was caused by a drug overdose, not the weapon, a medical examiner ruled.

Anthony Spencer, 35, was intoxicated and high on cocaine when police responded to a domestic disturbance call at his home Feb. 12, officials said. When police arrived, the 6-foot-tall, 280-pound man was brandishing a 7-inch knife.

Police shocked Spencer with a Taser and used a chemical spray to subdue him. He died in an ambulance on the way to a hospital.

Tests indicated Spencer died of a cocaine overdose and that shock delivered by the stun gun didn't contribute to his death, city Health Department spokesman Jeff Moran said Thursday, citing autopsy results.

Spencer's death drew the attention of civil liberties groups, including the ACLU and Amnesty International, which called for closer scrutiny of non-lethal weapons used by police.

The Taser fires two projectile darts, connected to the weapon by wires, that can reach a subject up to 21 feet away. The charge temporarily overrides the central nervous system; if the suspect continues to resist, the officer can deliver a second charge by pulling the trigger.



## Drugs, Not Taser, Killed Philly Man

PHILADELPHIA March 8, 2002 — A man who was shot with a stun gun during a confrontation with police on Feb. 12 was caused by a drug overdose, not the weapon, a medical examiner has ruled.

Anthony Spencer, 35, was intoxicated and high on cocaine when police responded to a domestic disturbance call at his home. When police arrived, the 6-foot-tall, 280-pound man was brandishing a 7-inch knife.

Police used a chemical spray and shocked Spencer with a Taser gun during the arrest. He died on his way to a hospital.

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