

DERZON & MENARD

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Legal Update



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In This Issue

This issue of *Legal Update* discusses factors to evaluate when choosing a lawyer after an accident. It also tells about obtaining witness information after an accident, and it discusses a new report on child safety seats.

If you have a question about any article, please call us.

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About Our Firm

We handle all types of personal injury cases, including:

- Auto Accidents
- Slip and Falls
- Product Injuries
- Medical Malpractice
- Dog Bites
- Work Injuries

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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Choosing The Right Personal Injury Lawyer After An Accident

If you are in a car, slip and fall or other kind of accident, one of the key decisions you will make is choosing the lawyer to represent you in your injury claim. Choosing the right attorney can impact whether you receive full compensation for your injuries and losses or bear some or even all of the damages yourself. Here are some key factors to evaluate when selecting a personal injury lawyer after an accident.

- Experience. Successfully handling personal injury claims is complex, and it helps to have experience: hands-on dealing with

insurance companies and their adjusters and knowledge of how insurance companies operate. A lawyer who has this experience and knows tactics insurance companies use to try to lower accident payouts is better able to guide you through the process and get you fair compensation.

- Skills. A lawyer with skills to negotiate your settlement and also courtroom skills in case the insurer won't settle fairly and your case must go to trial is a plus. Though most injury claims are settled without a trial, an attorney with trial skills won't be pushed around by a big

Continued on other side

Obtaining Witness Information After An Accident

If you are in an accident, witnesses can be a big help, especially if there's a dispute over what happened.

At the scene of a car, slip and fall or other accident, get the names, addresses and work and home phone numbers of witnesses. Try to get this information from all witnesses. This includes workers, others at the scene, and people nearby. The reasons are that some people may move away or have trouble remembering details of the accident. Also, some witnesses see or hear things from different places, so it may be necessary to have

information from several witnesses to fully piece together what happened. Questions may arise about conditions at the scene, like weather or light. So witnesses may be helpful even if they did not see everything.

After an accident, it may be hard to think clearly and you may just think other people will get witness information. But don't assume that other parties to the accident or the police (if they respond to the accident scene) will get witness information. Obtain this information yourself. It can go a long way to help you get the maximum compensation for your accident injuries and losses.

Woman Recovers Damages After Suffering Injuries From Dog Bite

Each year, over 5 million people suffer dog bite injuries. A recent case is a reminder that dog bite victims can make a claim to recover compensation for their injuries.

Janet H. was walking near her home when a pit bull left unattended by its owner bit her, causing severe injuries. Janet made a claim against the dog's owner, and a court awarded her damages. The court applied a rule most states follow: dog owners are liable for injuries their dog causes even if the dog hasn't hurt anyone before (provided the victim did not ignore warnings the dog might bite).

Report Shows Many Children Not Riding in Child Car Seats

Children are required by law to ride in child safety seats. A recent report found many people who drive children are violating the law and putting children at major risk of danger, including death.

The report was done by the U.S. Dept. of Transportation. It found that half of all children under the age of seven who were killed in car accidents were not in child safety seats.

Parents and others who drive young children should be sure the children ride in child safety seats and the seats are used properly. A good brochure from the government on child safety seats is on the Dept. of Transportation's website, www.dot.gov.

Choosing A Personal Injury Lawyer, *continued*

insurer. This goes a long way to getting you the compensation you are entitled to obtain.

- Resources. Moving a claim forward can require significant resources, including having the ability and finances to hire experts who can help reconstruct and present what happened. A personal injury lawyer with access to skilled experts – and who can help pay for these people while your claim is being pursued – is a valuable asset on your side.

- Representing your interests. A lawyer sensitive to your needs and helpful to you in the process is a benefit. You and your lawyer are a team, and it is better to have a

good working relationship.

- Knowledge of the law. You need a lawyer who knows the law of recovering compensation for personal injuries. Rules of "negligence," "fault" and "damages" are complex, as are court procedures and many other legal issues. You want a lawyer who knows the rules.

After an accident, it is vital to choose the right lawyer to handle your claim. Our law firm has the skills, experience, resources, knowledge and commitment to our clients to effectively handle auto and other accident claims. Our goal is to help you get the most compensation the law entitles you to receive for your injuries.

If An Injury Occurs

No one expects to be in an accident. But if you are in one, call us to find out about your rights. We will fight to obtain the maximum compensation for you.

Please also give our name to a friend or family member if they are in an accident.

Thank you for letting us serve your legal needs.

This newsletter is published for this firm's clients and friends. It has general information. Due to changes in the law, exceptions to general rules of law, and variations of state laws, seek professional legal advice before acting on any matter. ©2009 ANSI

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