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Legal Update



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In This Issue

This issue of *Legal Update* tells how to avoid common mistakes that accident victims make. It also tells why you likely won't have to go to court if you make a personal injury claim, and it tells about a new study concerning the safety of trucks and buses.

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

*Alan L. Derzon
Robert C. Menard*

After An Accident: Don't Make These Mistakes!

If you have been in an accident, what you say and do after it can affect your compensation. Here are some common mistakes accident victims make, and how to avoid them.

Handling a personal injury claim without a lawyer's help.

After an accident, an insurance adjuster will likely try to convince you not to use a lawyer, saying a lawyer won't get you more money. But handling your claim alone can be a big mistake. Adjusters work for the insurance company, not you, and they say this so the company can pay you less money. Studies

show accident victims receive more money with a lawyer's help. So don't make the mistake of believing adjusters who say a lawyer won't increase your compensation.

Giving statements to adjusters without consulting their lawyer.

After an accident, an adjuster may try to get taped statements from you. Adjusters are trained to get people to make damaging statements, and anything you say will be used to lower your compensation. So don't make the mistake of giving a statement to an adjuster without consulting your lawyer.

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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

Free Consultation

(414) 276-2100
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Making An Injury Claim Doesn't Automatically Mean Going To Court

Many accident victims think that if they make a claim to recover compensation for their injuries, the procedure will involve many court hearings and they will have to go to court. As such, one of the first things most accident victims want to know is whether their claim will be settled or there will be a lawsuit.

Though no one knows what will happen in a specific case, most personal injury claims -- over 80% according to several studies -- are settled out of court.

Even though most injury claims are settled, a small percentage

result in lawsuits. An insurance company may dispute aspects of a claim, so a lawsuit is needed to get what the accident victim is entitled to receive. Even if a lawsuit is filed, there likely won't be a full trial, as cases can settle at any time. According to several studies, only about 3% of cases had a trial.

If you are in an accident, don't let the fear of going to court stop you from making a claim. You could be giving up a valid claim that lets you recover compensation for your injuries. Also, if your injury claim is like most others, it will be resolved without you going to court.

Woman Hurt By Falling Merchandise at Store Receives Damages

Many injuries occur in large warehouse stores, where merchandise is often displayed very high, increasing the risk items will fall. As a recent case shows, people hurt by falling merchandise can make a claim to recover compensation for their injuries.

A woman shopping at a national chain store suffered severe injuries after several boxes of detergent fell from a shelf onto her head, neck and back. Because of her injuries, the woman had to stop working. She made a claim against the store, which argued she wasn't hurt as badly as she said. But a court ruled for the woman, awarding her a substantial amount of compensation.

Don't Make These Mistakes After An Accident, *continued*

Signing insurance company documents without legal advice.

Just as adjusters try to get you to make damaging statements, they may also try to get you to sign documents that help the insurance company. These documents could effectively end your claim for little money. Don't make the mistake of signing documents without consulting your lawyer.

Waiting to seek legal help.

The longer you wait to get legal help after an accident, the harder it can be to find evidence and witnesses. If you wait, you also risk losing your claim because the deadline for making claims may expire.

Settling too fast, before all your injuries are known.

Many accident victims think they suffered only minor injuries and accept a fast settlement. Later, they discover their injuries are worse than they thought, but they can't get more money. Since many injuries take time to develop, don't make the mistake of settling your claim before knowing the extent of your injuries.

These are some mistakes accident victims make that hurt their case. If you have questions about what to do after an accident, call us. Seeking legal help promptly will help you avoid these and other mistakes.

Study: Many Truck and Bus Drivers Have Serious Medical Conditions

A recent study by the U.S. government is a reminder to be extra careful when driving near large trucks and buses.

The study showed that over 500,000 people licensed to drive commercial vehicles like trucks and buses are eligible for government disability benefits due to serious medical conditions. This is around 5% of licensed commercial drivers.

To help increase your safety when driving near trucks and buses, never cut in front of them, since they take longer to stop than smaller vehicles. Also, stay out of their blind spots. As a general rule, if you can't see the truck driver's face in his or her mirror, he or she can't see you.

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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