

## Man Injured In Home Explosion Settles For \$3,250,000

October 25, 2002

A 42 year old man who survived a natural gas explosion at his residence at 4753 South Rockwell in Chicago settled his lawsuit today against People's Gas Light & Coke Company ("People's Gas") for \$3.25 million.

On June 25, 1998, Kevin Wesolowski returned home from an outing with his 11 year old daughter, Samantha, and, upon entering the house, smelled gas and sent his daughter outside to wait until he investigated the odor. Upon entering the kitchen, the source of the odor, Wesolowski switched on the overhead light which sparked the explosion. It was later determined that gas had been leaking out of an old Cobra flexible connector found behind his stove. Wesolowski suffered from third degree burns on portions of his face, neck, arms and upper body, which left him with some permanent scarring. Plastic surgery has helped reduce the appearance of the scars to some degree. He was also unable to work as a plant manager for six months during his recovery.

Philip Harnett Corboy, Jr. of Corboy & Demetrio represented Wesolowski and filed a lawsuit against People's Gas in the Circuit Court of Cook County. A People's Gas serviceman had been in Wesolowski's house in February of 1997 but had failed to detect the faulty flexible connector in Wesolowski's kitchen. Over time, this flexible connector developed a leak due to a defective solder joint which led to the explosion on June 25, 1998. It was known by People's Gas at the time of the service call that the solder on the end joint of these Cobra connectors could degrade over time after reacting to certain compounds found in natural gas. People's Gas had been advised to be on the lookout for this very type of connector and, if found, to remove it from service or at least warn the customer to have it replaced immediately. Neither was ever done in the Wesolowski home. The explosion occurred 16 months later.

### Attorneys

- Philip Harnett Corboy Jr.

### Related Practices

- Personal Injury & Wrongful Death

The attorney stated:

Through intensive pretrial investigation, we determined that there had been a number of natural gas explosions throughout the country which were tied to this type of uncoated brass flexible connector and that People's Gas had received these warnings from various consumer groups and from its own member organization, American Gas Association. Based on this information, People's Gas had set up a procedure for inspections during any type of service call at a customer's house. Had the People's Gas serviceman done a proper inspection of all the gas connections at Mr. Wesolowski's house when he was there 16 months before the explosion, this tragedy could have easily been prevented.