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Man burned in gym steam room receives \$5.3M

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A man who sustained third degree burns after fainting inside a steam room at a gym received a \$5.3 million settlement.

In 2019, Jeffrey and Wendy Gordy sued Lincoln Square Athletic Club and Accurate Industries in Cook County Circuit Court, alleging that Jeffrey sustained “severe and permanent injuries” after fainting in the steam room following a workout in 2018.

Gordy, then 46, alleged that he was found “unresponsive, bleeding from his head and with skin missing from his lower legs.”

He was transported to Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center where he was diagnosed with severe burns to his bilateral lower legs and feet, according to the second amended complaint.

The complaint alleged that Lincoln Square Athletic Club “failed to have proper signs to warn members of the risks associated with use of the steam room after a workout,” “failed to maintain the steam room in the men’s locker room at an acceptable and safe temperature,” and “failed to timely round and check on members in the

steam room in the men’s locker room,” among other claims.

It alleged that Accurate Industries, who installed the steam room, “failed to install the steam head in a reasonably safe location” and “make safe recommendations to Lincoln Square Athletic Club to protect against the risk of burn injuries in the steam room,” among other claims.

Jordan S. Powell of Passen & Powell represented the Gordys.

He said that Gordy, now 50, possibly fainted as a result of a pre-existing seizure disorder or hyperthermia, sustained second and third degree burns to his lower legs, feet and toes and eventually had all of his toes amputated.

Powell said that he obtained the product manual from Steamist, who manufactured the steam system, and discovered that the steam head at Lincoln Square Athletic Club was installed 6 inches from the ground, as opposed to the required 18 inches. In addition, a “steam room plumbing burn expert” tested the room to determine the temperature difference based on the steam head’s height.

“If it had been 18 inches,



Jordan S. Powell



Matthew A. Passen

the most that would have touched his feet and skin was 95 to 97 degrees,” he said. “Whereas at six inches, he had some parts where he was getting 212 degrees, some parts that were getting 160 degrees, 130 degrees.”

Powell said that in spite of his injuries, Gordy was able to continue his work at a non-profit organization.

“He’s continuing to follow with a podiatrist as well as occasional physical therapy,” he said. “For someone with this type of injury, though, he’s doing remarkably well. He’s able to walk, he’s able to rollerblade, he’s able to ride a bike, he’s able to drive.”

Powell said that the settlement is a “fair amount” and may assist with potential future procedures, like bone shortening surgery and a future amputation in case of

an infection, among others.

Matthew A. Passen of Passen & Powell also represented the Gordys.

Dan Costello and Shipra Mehta of Costello Ginex & Wideikis, P.C. represented Lincoln Square Athletic Club. They could not be reached for comment.

Stephen S. Weiss and Kristina M. Satek of Tribler Orpett & Meyer P.C. represented Accurate Industries. They could not be reached for comment.

Judge Robert F. Harris entered a dismissal order Feb. 17.

The settlement was reached Feb. 9.

Retired Kane County Judge F. Keith Brown, now with ADR Systems, mediated the case.

The case is *Gordy v. Lincoln Square Athletic Club, et al.*, No. 2019 L 004068.