



Simmons Hanly Conroy secures \$40 million asbestos jury verdict against Goodyear for Navy veteran

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NEW YORK – [Simmons Hanly Conroy](#), one of the nation’s leading mesothelioma law firms, has secured a \$40.1 Million verdict on behalf of J. Walter Twidwell, who was diagnosed with mesothelioma after being exposed to asbestos while serving in the U.S. Navy. The jury awarded \$40.1 Million in compensatory damages against the defendant, Goodyear.

Firm shareholders [Daniel P. Blouin](#), [James Kramer](#), [Laurence Nassif](#), [Timothy Thompson](#) and associate [Robert Woodward](#) represented Mr. Twidwell in *Walter Twidwell v. Aerco International Inc., et al No. 190136-2017* in New York County Supreme Court.

Mr. Twidwell joined the Navy in 1954 as a boiler tender and fireman. His nearly 20 years of service covered both the Vietnam and the Korean wars. He conducted maintenance and repairs in the engine and fire rooms of seven vessels ported in New York, California and Washington. Twidwell retired in 1973 as a Chief Petty Officer.

The jury found that, during his time in the Navy, Mr. Twidwell was exposed to asbestos dust released from the manipulation of Durabla and Cranite gaskets manufactured by Goodyear.

“As a veteran, Walter dedicated his life to keeping others safe,” said Kramer, who served as co-lead with Blouin. “We are pleased the truth prevailed, and the jury determined Walter’s pleural mesothelioma was the result of his exposure to gaskets manufactured by Goodyear.”

The dangers of asbestos have been known since the early 1900s. According to evidence presented during trial, Goodyear knew of the hazards of asbestos as early as 1939 but never warned about the hazards associated with its asbestos-containing gasket material.

Mesothelioma, a deadly cancer caused by asbestos, has a latency period of 10 to 50 years. In 2017, Mr. Twidwell experienced shortness of breath and a cough. Doctors diagnosed him with mesothelioma in March 2017 after an X-ray revealed a mass in his right lung.

“While no amount of money will give Walter back his health, this result is fair compensation for his loss of his self-reliance and dignity,” said Kramer. “We are satisfied with the result.”

Before his diagnosis, Mr. Twidwell lived an active life. He built his log cabin home in the Washington woods by hand. He actively logged the property and took regular walks with his miniature dachshund, Hiram. He also is a member of the local Shriners and Masons chapters and contributed to the community by hosting an annual reading contest for school children and providing transportation to the elderly.

In the 17 months since Mr. Twidwell’s diagnosis, all of that has changed. He told lawyers during the trial he is physically unable to live his life the same as before.

“More and more and more, I’m having to rely on people to help me and that’s what hurts,” he said during his trial testimony.

The trial lasted three weeks, and the jury deliberated for less than two hours before holding Goodyear liable for Mr. Twidwell’s mesothelioma.

About Simmons Hanly Conroy, LLC

Simmons Hanly Conroy dedicates its legal practice to helping victims of mesothelioma. As one of the nation’s largest mass tort law firms, Simmons has represented thousands of patients and families affected by mesothelioma throughout the country. Additionally, the firm’s attorneys have been appointed to leadership in numerous national multidistrict litigations involving dangerous drugs, medical devices, prescription opioids, and consumer protection issues, including Vioxx, Yaz, Volkswagen Emissions and DePuy Pinnacle. Since 1999, the firm has pledged more than \$20 million to cancer research and been a leading supporter of mesothelioma research and asbestos prevention. Read more at www.simmonsfirm.com.