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Broken ankle after slip in parking lot settles for \$2M

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A man who broke his right ankle while investigating a fire at a Chrysler plant has settled his lawsuit for \$2 million.

The agreement ended a 2014 lawsuit filed by Steven Snider against Chrysler Group LLC and snow removal company Snow Systems Inc. Snider, employed as a fire utility officer by a third-party vendor, slipped and fell on a patch of ice in a parking lot while investigating a fire near the Chrysler Belvidere Assembly Plant outside of Rockford.

Snider alleged Chrysler and Snow Systems did not develop a proper snow removal plan and had placed a pile of snow that turned to ice near an entrance.

The settlement is the highest reported Winnebago County settlement for an ankle injury, according to John L. Kirkton of the Jury Verdict Reporter, a product of Law Bulletin Media.

The case was scheduled for a July 23 trial before Winnebago County Circuit Judge Lisa R. Fabiano.

Snider's attorney Matthew S. Sims of Rapoport Law Offices P.C. said in an interview Monday that Chrysler and Snow Systems blamed each other for the "dangerous situation" after his client's suit was filed.

Sims said the snow removal company blamed Chrysler for not giving them permission to remove the snow pile and suggesting Chrysler put it there in the first place, while Chrysler blamed Snow Systems for violating industry standards.

Snow Systems' attorney Steven C. Wolf of Wolf Law Ltd. said in an interview his clients approached Chrysler in January 2014 about moving the snow piles because they were too large.

But once Chrysler found out how much it would cost the company decided not to move them, Wolf said.

Chrysler's attorney Phillip R. Nava, senior counsel at Tristan & Cervantes, could not be reached for comment.

More than four years after the injury Snider still sees an orthopedic doctor and a pain management specialist. Sims said his client hopes to return to work but likely in a different position.

Snider is also represented by Joshua L. Weisberg of Rapoport Law Offices.

“While Mr. Snider has suffered greatly due to the defendant’s negligence, we are glad that Chrysler and Snow Systems are ultimately being held accountable and that we are able to obtain a just result for our client,” Weisberg said in a news release issued by the firm.

The settlement was paid \$975,000 each by Chrysler Group LLC and Snow Systems Inc., plus \$50,000 in addition to workers’ compensation lien waiver by employer G4S Secure Solutions.

The case out of Winnebago County is *Steven Snider v. Chrysler Group LLC, et al.*, 14 L 199.

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