

**MASSACHUSETTS
LAWYERS WEEKLY**Print **Homeowner sees smoke; explosion follows****Suffers burns; DPU: gas co. not to blame; \$440,000 settlement****Published:** April 29, 2013

After finishing his shift, a police officer returned home and noticed black smoke coming from his chimney.

Believing that his burner was malfunctioning, he went down to the basement and turned the light on when his home suddenly exploded. The blast caused several burns but no other physical injury. The plaintiff was subsequently diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

The defendant gas company denied liability and maintained that no lapse in its maintenance of the burner caused the explosion. Its position was disputed by the plaintiff's expert but was supported by the Department of Public Utilities.

The defendant also disputed the nature and extent of the plaintiff's diagnosis of PTSD.

Action: Negligence & tort

Injuries alleged: Second-degree burns, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Case name: Withheld

Court/case no.: Department of Industrial Accidents, No. 3268307

Jury and/or judge: N/A (mediated)

Mediator: Paul Finn

Amount: \$440,000

Date: Jan. 15, 2013

Attorney: Jeffrey T. Scuteri of Goddard, Scuteri & Delaney, Salem (for the plaintiff)

Detailed Information

Type:	Mediation
Total Value:	\$440,000.00
Verdict/Settlement Date:	1/1/2013
Type of Action:	Negligence & Tort
Court:	Confidential
Case Number:	Confidential

Caption: *Confidential v. Confidential*
Plaintiff(s) v. Defendants(s)
Confidential Confidential

Injuries Alleged: Shoulder, arm, elbow, wrist, hand
Emotional, psychological

Injuries Detail: Second-degree burns, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Tried Before: Mediation

Judge or Mediator or Arbitrator: Other (Paul Finn)

Attorney(s) for Plaintiff(s)

No plaintiff attorneys

Attorney(s) for Defendant(s)

Lead Attorney: John T. Scuteri
Firm: Goddard, Scuteri & Delaney (Salem, Massachusetts)

Insurance Carrier(s)

No insurance companies involved

Plaintiff(s) Expert(s)

No plaintiff experts

Defendant(s) Expert(s)

No defendant experts