



# MG+M The Law Firm Secures Complete Defense Verdict in California for Former Asbestos Cement Pipe Supplier

September 21, 2023

MG+M The Law Firm Partners [Adam Hays](#), [Carrie Lin](#) and [Kyle Stevens](#), who are based in MG+M's Hattiesburg, San Francisco and Madison County/St. Louis offices respectively, obtained a complete defense verdict in Los Angeles Superior Court on September 19, 2023, on behalf of a former supplier of asbestos cement pipe. The plaintiff—a 62-year-old non-smoker—alleged that he was exposed for years to asbestos from our client's asbestos cement water pipe, and that his asbestos exposure caused him to contract lung cancer. In their closing argument, plaintiff's counsel asked for an award of more than \$100 million for the plaintiff and his wife, in addition to punitive damages.

The jury came back within three hours with a complete defense verdict for MG+M's client on the following grounds: (1) that the plaintiff was a “sophisticated user” of asbestos cement pipe, thereby disposing of any failure to warn based claims; (2) that the plaintiff's exposure to asbestos was a result of a product misuse (cutting the pipe with an unventilated power tool), thereby disposing of all strict product liability claims; and (3) that MG+M's client did not act negligently in its sale and distribution of asbestos cement pipe. In short, the jury believed that the plaintiff's exposures to asbestos could not be legally attributed to our client, as the plaintiff failed to work with the product in the manner recommended by the company, and in violation of the applicable OSHA standards in place at the time.

The four-week trial was held in Los Angeles Superior Court in Van Nuys, California. Notably, MG+M was able to introduce independent evidence from the water district where the plaintiff performed work that our client's asbestos cement pipe bore warning labels informing customers of the risk of improper work practices, such as cutting the pipe with a power tool. This evidence, along with expert and fact witness testimony regarding industry knowledge of asbestos hazards in the 1980s, which was elicited during the direct examinations of defense witnesses and cross-examination of the plaintiff's witnesses, ultimately secured our client a complete defense verdict.

This trial success would not have been possible without the tremendous work and efforts of the entire trial team, which included Manager of Technology Christopher Baughman, who is resident in MG+M's New Orleans office, Lead Trial Paralegal Christopher McHale, from the Boston office, and New York-based Partner [Anna Hwang](#).

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