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## LATE REPORT

**ACCIDENT VERDICT** — A Compton jury awarded \$10 million to a man who suffered permanent physical and mental injuries during a Nov. 2, 2002, maintenance accident in Carson, his lawyer said.

Jurors found general contractor Saxon Group and rigging contractor Air Products Corp. negligent for putting mismatched nuts and bolts on a crane used to move an 84,000-pound preheater, part of a hydrogen production facility. *Gray v. Air Products & Chemicals Inc.*, TC015844 (L.A. Super. Ct., filed Feb. 4, 2003).

Workers were replacing the preheater when the bolts slipped out of the nuts, sending it plunging to the ground where it hit a piece of wood. The wood shot out, shattering 49-year-old Daniel Gray's right leg, said his attorney Patrick McNicholas of the Los Angeles firm McNicholas & McNicholas.

The bolts were 20 millimeters and the nuts were 22 millimeters, McNicholas said.

"What a difference two millimeters

makes," he said. "And they say size doesn't matter."

Jurors awarded Gray economic damages, lost wages, past and future medical expenses and past and future pain and suffering.

The jury found Saxon Group 70 percent liable, and Air Products 30 percent liable in the negligence claim. Lawyers for the companies could not be reached late Friday for comment.

McNicholas said Saxon and Air Products tried to blame the preheater manufacturer, Benelux, but jurors disagreed, finding that the company was not liable.

Gray suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and will have to undergo more surgeries in the future to repair his leg, McNicholas said.

McNicholas said the award sets a precedent for work-related injury cases.

"Jurors are much more sensitive to someone hurt in the workplace than a generic injury case," such as a slip-and-fall or car accident, he said.

— Leslie Simmons