THOMPSONS SOLICITORS

GMB NORTHERN REGION

NEWS RELEASE

Justice for families Affected by Asbestos

Monday, February 21, 2011

Former GMB union shop steward receives compensation after asbestos cancer diagnosis

A North East man has received a substantial sum in compensation just nine weeks after he was diagnosed with asbestos cancer.

The 81 year-old from South Shields was diagnosed with the fatal cancer mesothelioma in July 2010 after complaining about stomach problems to his doctor.

Mesothelioma is caused by exposure to asbestos. There is no cure for the disease and sufferers often only have months to live.

He was exposed to asbestos while working as a chipper and painter for shipyards on the River Tyne, including Redheads Ship Repairers and Tyne Dock Engineering in South Shields.

He said: “I have found it difficult coming to terms with my illness. Not so much dying but more the fact that I am losing my independence, something I was always proud of. I know that this will only get worse and it scares me.”

The former Boilermakers’ union member, now part of the GMB, was a shop steward and Tyneside ship yard convenor . Following his diagnosis he contacted the union for help. The GMB instructed its specialist lawyers Thompsons Solicitors to pursue a claim for compensation.

Thompsons was successful in obtaining full compensation in just nine weeks.

GMB regional Secretary Tom Brennan said: “This valued member of the GMB has developed a devastating disease through just doing a hard days work. We are more than happy to support him in his fight for justice and that our specialist legal team have been able to settle his claim so quickly.”

Andrew Venn from Thompsons Solicitors in Newcastle said: “The rapid action taken to investigate and pursue this claim vigorously to a successful conclusion in just over two months has ensured this member can appreciate the compensation and has the peace of mind knowing that the claim has been finalised.

“The case was pushed hard to reduce the time it took to a minimum while ensuring the client received the maximum amount of compensation. The fact that the member contacted his union for help straight after he was diagnosed meant that I could commence the investigation of the claim immediately. It was the assistance of the union that gave the claim a head start.”

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