

SAFE HARBOR

A monthly newsletter for the Maritime worker from
The Law Offices of Lyle C. Cavin, Jr.

January 2012



Thank you for your maritime service and taking the time to review our Newsletter. We at the Law Offices of Lyle C. Cavin, Jr. hope you find the following information helpful. If you have any questions regarding your rights or remedies please contact us at any time. We are here to serve you.



Vibratory Tool Injuries



The Little Known Danger That Ends Careers

Merchant seamen spend hours a day conducting vessel maintenance. This work often includes chipping paint, removing rust and scale from the decks and bulkheads by using vibratory tools such as chippers and needle guns. Some manufacturers of these tools have very specific safety guidelines as to how long it is safe to operate these tools. We have found that most shipowners either are not aware of these safety guidelines or they refuse to abide by them. As a result many of our clients are now suffering from severe nerve and vascular damage caused by overuse of these tools. Unfortunately, because of the nature of these types of injuries, they can go undetected for years.

If you have used vibratory tools and have complaints of numbness, tingling or pain in the hands, wrists or arms you need to seek immediate medical attention from a specialist. Your employer must allow you to see any physician of your own choosing. All too often merchant seamen make the mistake of trying to "tough out" the symptoms or believe that the pain will resolve on its own. Many cases have been damaged by this erroneous

assumption. These injuries are frequently career ending. Proper medical diagnosis is necessary.

Question from the bridge:



THE BRIDGE

Dear Mr. Cavin, I've just recently suffered an injury while I was working on a ship. My Company told me to see one of their own doctors. Do I have to see a company doctor? - Don S. Seattle, WA

NO! Injured Jones Act seamen are NOT required to see only company doctors. You should pick a doctor who you like, with whom you are comfortable, and who treats you fairly and appropriately. Some maritime workers are required to see certain medical groups pursuant to union agreements but there are many exceptions to even those requirements.

Unfortunately, some company-affiliated medical providers will try to force you back to work before you are ready, and will avoid performing tests that reveal the true extent of any possible injury.

About Our Law Firm

For more than four decades, merchant marines, longshoremen, fishermen and harbor workers plying their trades at sea, on our U.S. coastal waters and inland waterways have turned to the maritime law firm of Lyle C. Cavin, Jr. & Associates in Oakland. Today, we are proud to be recognized as one of the preeminent maritime law firms serving injured marine workers nationwide, as well as one of the most successful personal injury litigation firms serving victims of negligence in the San Francisco Bay Area and throughout the West Coast.

Team Approach to Every Personal Injury and Jones Act Claim

When you retain Lyle C. Cavin Jr. & Associates for a Jones Act injury claim or personal injury claim, you don't get just one attorney, you get our entire team of dedicated professionals. Our attorneys offer more than 150 combined years of courtroom and negotiated claims settlement experience. We will represent your interests with unwavering dedication, speed and expertise.

Law Offices of Lyle Cavin, Jr.

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