

- **Mann v. Rhino Linings, USA. et al.**

Los Angeles Superior Court, Norwalk, California; VC036135

**\$12,762,000**

**Chemical Explosion - Negligent Design**

**Facts:** Plaintiff, Kendall Mann, a sales manager, age 38, sustained a burn injury during a fire on premises operated by his employer, Defendant Rhino Linings of Santa Fe Springs (Rhino SFS). Rhino SFS acted as a dealer for the Defendant Rhino Linings USA (Rhino USA). Rhino USA supplies its dealers nationwide with all equipment and chemicals used in the process. In 1999, Rhino SFS applicators had just finished spraying a truck. A fire started at an exhaust fan located in the spray area. Plaintiff Kendall Mann jumped in the newly sprayed truck and drove it outside the building. Plaintiff then attempted to re-enter the building believing his two co-employees were still inside. As he re-entered the building, the plaintiff sustained burn injuries. Rhino Linings SFS learned at the time of the fire it had no workers' compensation coverage. The plaintiff Hose-man Inc. operated an adjoining business and sustained property damage only.

**Contentions:** Plaintiff contended that Rhino USA negligently trained, managed and authorized their dealership, the Defendant Rhino Linings of Santa Fe Springs. The operation was conducted without appropriate fire safety systems and the required permit for spray booth.

**Injuries:** Plaintiff sustained burn injuries to his hands, arms, head, neck, and back; approximately 20 percent of his total body surface area. The plaintiff has undergone several graft procedures.

**Experts:** Mr. Robert Armstrong, Ph.D., P.E. Electrical Engineering, Mr. Brad Phillipson, Fire Origin and Cause.

**Additional Information:** This verdict was noted as one of the largest personal injury verdicts obtained in the Norwalk courthouse.