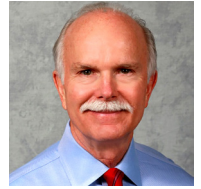


Mills Law Alert



Summer 2018

Water and Amusement Parks: Not All Fun & Games



Water parks and other amusement-theme venues have long been considered the epitome of summer fun. In fact, the more than 400 amusement parks in the United States host some 350,000 visitors annually. But an increasing number of reports detail horrific accounts of ride malfunctions (roller coasters, ferris wheels, waterslides, etc.) and patrons being seriously injured or killed. These reports serve as a reminder that our favorite amusement parks can be not only fun, but dangerous.

Amusement Park Lawsuits on the Rise

Factors that play into water and amusement park accidents include defective rides, improper maintenance and inspection, structural or design defects, lack of clear warning signs, carelessness of park employees, and even the carelessness of the patrons themselves. If park and ride officials are held liable for an accident, damages can range from hundreds of thousands of dollars to multi-million dollar lawsuits. In 2016 a young boy, who happened to be the son of a Kansas legislator, was decapitated at a Schlitterbahn water park while riding what

at the time was dubbed the world's tallest water slide. The boy's family settled for nearly \$20 million in settlement payments. An executive with the park was recently charged with involuntary manslaughter. Because of the nature of many rides, there are numerous types of injuries patrons can suffer, including: head, neck and back injuries; burns; broken bones and fractures; spine injuries; cardiac arrest; disfigurement.

Take necessary precautions

If you are planning to visit a water or amusement park this summer, be mindful of the risks involved with any ride. And follow the rules. A common defense for amusement park lawsuits is that the injured rider did not comply with posted age, weight and height requirements, or displayed recklessness to the point where the rider became a danger to themselves or others.

If you or a family member were recently the victim of a water or amusement park accident, you need an experienced lawyer in your corner with hands-on knowledge in these types of complicated claims. Call us today!

Safety Tips for Amusement Parks: Do's & Don'ts

- Obey age, weight, and height requirements for every ride
- Be mindful of posted safety rules
- Keep hands, arms, legs, and feet inside the ride at all times
- Dress appropriately...no dangling jewelry or baggy clothing
- If harnesses are not properly secure, get off the ride and notify park employees
- Remain seated in the ride until it comes to a complete stop
- Do not ride any rides if you suffer from heart or any other medical complications
- Parents should keep an eye on small children at all times
- Know the signs of injury

Thanks for the Referrals

The best source for our business is word-of-mouth. We are thankful that so many of our clients and friends feel confident in recommending our firm. If you or someone you know has been injured or needs legal help, call us.

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Statute of Limitations: A Ticking Clock

If you are considering coming to see us, be mindful of the ticking clock known as the Statute of Limitations. This is a legal rule that limits how long you can wait to bring a claim against another person. If the claim is not made before the statute of limitation passes, the law may prevent you from ever doing so.

So how long is the statute of limitations for an injury claim? In Texas, the general answer is two years from the date you were injured.

Call us as soon as possible after an accident or injury. We will evaluate your case and make sure the legal clock hasn't run out on you.



Crash Course: Collisions with 18-Wheelers



It has been reported that some 500,000 accidents involving those big 18-wheeler trucks occur on American roads and highways each year. And the results can be catastrophic. Here are a few pointers to help keep you safer on the roads this summer:

- Don't assume that an 18-wheeler driver can see you
- If avoidable, do not drive side-by-side with an 18-wheeler
- When driving near a truck at night, turn off your bright headlights
- Never pass behind a driver who is backing up
- Be aware that big rigs swing wide on turns
- Never tailgate an 18-wheeler

People injured by the negligence of commercial truckers are entitled to compensation for their injuries. But these cases can be difficult to unravel. You should never rely on the trucking company's insurance adjuster to look out for your interests. Call us today. We'll be happy to discuss the matter with you.

Dog Bites and Children... **(Usually) Man's Best Friend**

The threat of being bitten by a dog may not be high on your radar this summer. After all, aren't dogs man's best friend? But according to the Center for Disease Control, more than half of dog bite injuries come from dogs that are familiar to us rather than strays we happen to come across. The CDC also points out that approximately 4.5 million dog bites occur in the United States every year. Nearly one in every five people who are bitten requires medical attention.

Children are at the highest risk of being bitten by a dog, which makes these statistics all the more horrifying.

Injuries from dog bites include:

- Cuts, scratches, or lacerations
- Nerve damage
- Illnesses due to infection (rabies, tetanus)
- Muscle tears
- Broken bones
- Puncture wounds

Texas has its own dog bite law, and you may be able to seek damages from the dog's owner if you can show the owner was negligent, failed to stop a dog attack after it started, or that the dog has shown

previous signs of aggressive tendencies. While no one can completely prevent a potential dog attack, there are ways to decrease your chances of being bitten. The first is never approach a dog that is on the loose or that you have never seen before. It is also a good idea to remain calm and allow a dog to sniff and smell you before you attempt to pet it. If knocked down by a dog, roll into a ball and remain motionless while covering your ears and neck with your hands.

Above all, teach your children how to safely interact with dogs and never leave small children unattended with a pet, whether yours or someone else's.

If you or a loved one has been injured because of a dog bite, give the Mills Law Firm a call. We bring the necessary knowledge and a compassionate approach to all cases. Whatever your issue or concern, we are here to help you.



Social Media: Anything You Post Can Be Used Against You



Social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter make it easy for us to share our lives with family and friends. It is difficult to remember the days when we couldn't just reach out and touch someone

with the snap of our fingers. And while we want our clients to enjoy all the benefits of social media, remember that you don't have to post everything that's going on in your life.

This is especially true if you are in the middle of a legal claim.

Because anything you post on social media can, and quite likely will, be used against you.

For example, if you were in an accident, it's not a good idea to go on Facebook and admit fault. Conversely, imagine what it would look like if you claimed you were injured in an accident but continued to post pictures of you at the beach, partying with friends, in the days following the incident. You can be asked to produce information from your social media accounts as part of a legal case, and situations like these can directly affect the value of your claim.

At the Mills Law Firm, we tell our clients to never post anything to social media that you wouldn't want to see on the front page of the local newspaper.

After a Wreck... **Brain Injuries Not Always Apparent**

While driving home a young man attempts a left turn at an intersection when another vehicle, coming from out of nowhere, hits him on the passenger side. Luckily, both drivers were traveling at a reasonable speed. But the wreck caused enough force that the young man's head slammed against the driver's side window and then snapped backward. He gets out of the car, trades insurance information with the other driver, and calls for a ride home. Though he feels a bit woozy, he doesn't reveal that fact to police officers on the scene. The next day, he begins complaining of headaches, dizziness, and blurred vision.

Though the young man was able to walk away from his accident with no noticeable injuries – a broken arm or lacerations, for instance – he failed to consider how hard his head had cracked that window. Brain trauma is a significant possibility in almost any car wreck, as the sheer force of the sudden stop when two cars collide can abruptly shift the brain and cause it to collide with

the hard bone of the skull. The impact can lead to bruising of the brain, swelling, and even internal bleeding.

If you are in a car wreck, here are some brain injury-related symptoms you should be aware of:

- Dizziness and nausea
- Headaches
- Low levels of alertness
- Ringing in the ears
- Slurred speech
- Being knocked unconscious
- Numbness in extremities
- Vomiting

Because symptoms of a concussion or other brain injury may not manifest themselves immediately, or even be delayed for days, if you are in a wreck

consider staying in your car. Limiting movement will allow you to evaluate whether or not you have suffered any type of injury, especially trauma to the head or a whiplash.

Whatever you do, do not ignore the signs of a potential brain injury. Delaying treatment will only make the situation worse – and could be fatal.



Actual resolution of legal issues depends upon many factors, including variations of facts and Texas law. This newsletter is not intended to provide legal advice on specific subjects, but rather to provide insight into legal development and issues. The reader should always consult with legal counsel before taking action on matters covered by this newsletter.