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75 cents

Injured glass worker gets \$1.3M in settlement

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MILLVILLE — A city resident reached a \$1.3 million settlement with Wheaton Industries and an equipment manufacturer related to injuries he suffered in a 2004 workplace accident.

Thomas Bryant sustained severe burns in January 2004 after his shirt caught fire while he was operating a glass-bottle

manufacturing machine at the Glass Group Inc. company, which is now bankrupt.

Bryant's attorney, Cherry Hill-based Andrew Rossetti, said he filed suit against Wheaton Industries and Maul Technologies in Cumberland County Superior Court in January 2006. Rossetti said he believed both companies were responsible for designing and building the piece of equipment, which lacked adequate safety guards.

The two sides settled on

Feb. 24. Rossetti said it was a very difficult case, because both parties claimed the other one was responsible for building the piece of equipment.

"We had 30 depositions to determine who made the machine," he said.

Bryant was not able to work for three years after the accident and had medical costs of more than \$1 million, Rossetti said. Bryant has scars on his chest, face and arms, a filter implanted in his leg for

blood clots and injuries that limit his breathing, he said.

"It's a great relief to be able to get Tom some money to stabilize his income," he said.

Maul paid 35 percent of the settlement and Wheaton paid for 65 percent of it, Rossetti said.

Maul attorney Robert McGuirl, of Park Ridge, said the settlement was not an admission of liability, but his client felt settling was the most prudent course of action.