

Hurt construction worker gets \$4 million settlement

FORT WORTH (UPI) — Five defendants, including Texas Utilities Co. and the city of Arlington, agreed Friday to pay \$4 million in an out-of-court settlement to a construction worker who lost part of both arms in an electrical accident.

The parties involved reached the agreement to pay Matthew Glenn Turner, 23, of Corsicana, the \$4 million the civil suit could come to trial in the court of State District Judge Michael D. Schattman.

Turner, who was employed as a sheet metal worker installing gutters on a home in Arlington on April 5, 1984, came in contact with a high voltage power line strung above the roof of the dwelling.

He suffered severe shock and electrical burns, and surgeons were forced to amputate both his arms below the elbow.

Turner filed suit last year against Texas Utilities Co., two of its subsidiaries, Texas Utilities

Electric Co. and Texas Electric Service Co., the city of Arlington, Arlington homeowners William and Francis Bondurant, contractor Jim Bush Jr. and subcontractor Lane Supply Co. for negligence.

Turner's lawyer, Richard Warren Mithoff, said the utility company failed to maintain safe clearance between the uninsulated electrical lines and the roof.

"It was our position that the electric company was negligent in failing to remove the overhead electrical line at the construction site," Mithoff said. "The other parties were negligent in failing to recognize the hazard."

The defendants denied they were negligent and the electric companies maintained the accident was Turner's fault.

Turner, who has learned to use artificial arms, is working with his father at a Midlothian hardware store.