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**PERSONAL INJURY
VETERANS DISABILITY
& SOCIAL SECURITY**



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The holidays are behind us and it's almost February. Time flies. We hope you all had a safe and memorable season. As our first Personal Injury communication of the New Year, we wanted to talk about a very serious disease that impacts the West Virginia area – mainly because of the types of industries in our area. Going back decades, manufacturing, mining, steel and power have been big business in our state. Unfortunately, many of these employers put profit over safety and chose to conceal over taking immediate action. As a result, we continue to see and represent many mesothelioma cases – a deadly form of cancer. If you worked with asbestos or even lived with someone who did, know the complications and, if needed, seek medical treatment and counsel.

The next article is about a form of “tough love.” Please avoid

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distracted driving. And if you have teenagers, do everything you can to monitor their behavior and choices. So many of our cases are heart-wrenching, but those involving youth are some of the toughest. I am an attorney, but I'm also a mother of two. My New Year's wish would be for everyone to put the phones down when driving! We hope you have a safe and wonderful 2020.

Sincerely,



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At Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law,
**Mesothelioma Is Too
Close to Home**



Malignant mesothelioma is a type of cancer that occurs in the thin layer of tissue that covers the majority of your internal organs (mesothelium).

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It is an aggressive and deadly form of cancer. Mesothelioma treatments are available, but for many people with mesothelioma, a cure isn't possible.

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West Virginia, located in the heart of the Appalachian range, is a primarily rural state with abundant natural resources that have been prime for mining. It's also home to industries that include manufacturing, steel and power. As a result, the state has been home to numerous exposure threats. In fact, our state ranks 26th in the U.S. for mesothelioma and asbestosis deaths.

Asbestos Exposure: The Primary Risk Factor for Mesothelioma

Most mesotheliomas are thought to be related to asbestos exposure. Asbestos is a mineral that's found naturally in the environment. Asbestos fibers are strong and resistant to heat, making them useful in a wide variety of applications, such as in insulation, brakes, shingles, flooring and many other products. One of the most obvious sources of asbestos exposure is working in an asbestos mine or processing center. There are no existing asbestos mines in West Virginia, but coal miners can suffer from asbestos exposure.

Factors that may increase the risk of mesothelioma include:

- **Personal history of asbestos exposure.** If you've been directly exposed to asbestos fibers at work or at home, your risk of mesothelioma is greatly increased.
- **Living with someone who works with asbestos.** People who are exposed to asbestos may carry the fibers home on their skin and clothing. Exposure to these stray fibers over many years can put others in the home at risk of mesothelioma. People who work with high levels of asbestos can reduce the risk of bringing home asbestos fibers by showering and changing clothes before leaving work.
- **A family history of mesothelioma.** If your parent, sibling or child has mesothelioma, you may have an increased risk of this disease.
- **Radiation therapy to the chest.** If you had radiation therapy for cancer in your chest, you might have an increased risk of mesothelioma.



Complications

As pleural mesothelioma spreads in the chest, it puts pressure on the structures in that area. This can cause complications, such as:

- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain
- Difficulty swallowing
- Pain caused by pressure on the nerves and spinal cord
- Accumulation of fluid in the chest (pleural effusion), which can compress the lung nearby and make breathing difficult

If You Have Symptoms or Have Lost a Loved One, You Need Experienced Representation

In most cases, mesothelioma victims win monetary damages if they sue, but the cases can be complicated and a mesothelioma lawyer is usually needed to identify the parties who are liable for the asbestos exposure (asbestos manufacturers, insurance companies or asbestos victims' trust funds) and begin the lawsuit or settlement process. Because mesothelioma cases are a specialized legal niche, it's important to hire an experienced and knowledgeable mesothelioma lawyer. That's Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law. [Contact us](#) for a free consultation.

Sources: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mesothelioma/symptoms-causes/syc-20375022>
<https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/mesothelioma-asbestos-lawyer-hire-30343.html>
<https://www.asbestos.com/states/west-virginia/>



Texts, Calls, Emails – Leave Your Phone Alone While Driving



Each day in the United States, approximately nine people are killed and more than 1,000 injured in crashes that are reported to involve a distracted driver. In 2019, distracted driving was a reported factor in 8.5% of fatal motor vehicle crashes. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) leads the national effort to save lives by preventing this dangerous behavior. Get the [facts](#), get involved, and help keep America's roads safe.

What Is Distracted Driving?

Distracted driving is actually any activity that diverts attention from driving, including talking or texting on your phone, eating and drinking, talking to people in your vehicle, fiddling with the stereo, entertainment or navigation system – anything that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving.



Texting is the most alarming distraction. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for five seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.

According to the American Automotive Association (AAA[®]) research, 82% of adults admitted to using a cell phone while driving, while that number was 72% for teens (15 – 19). However, these results are self-reported. It could be that the same teenage distracted driving statistics are inaccurate because older drivers are simply more honest than young adults.

You cannot drive safely unless the task of driving has your full attention. Any nondriving activity you engage in is a potential distraction and increases your risk of crashing.

Unfortunately, you can be a safe driver but become a victim at the hands of another person. Technology is consuming our lives. Even though the number of awareness campaigns is increasing, so are the number of cases. If you are ever involved in a distracted driving accident, please do not hesitate to give us a call at 877.526.3457 or visit jandils.com.

Source: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/distracted-driving>
https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/distracted_driving/index.html

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963 Market St. | Parkersburg, WV 26101

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