Asbestos Disease Among Railroad Workers

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How can you find out if you have an asbestos caused lung disease?

A current chest x-ray read by a radiologist or pulmonary specialist familiar with asbestos disease can determine if any damage exists. Specialized training is necessary to diagnose an asbestos caused disease. The changes asbestos causes on chest x-ray are subtle and are often missed by doctors who are not accustomed to diagnosing asbestos caused disease. Your family doctor may not be trained in the diagnosis of dust diseases of the lungs and may mis-diagnose breathing problems. Symptoms such as shortness of breath and coughing are often attributed to the aging process, smoking, or other breathing disorders.

What are my legal rights if I have lung disease or cancer caused by my railroad work?

The Federal Employers’ Liability Act (FELA) allows railroad workers to recover damages for on-the-job injuries, including occupational diseases such as cancer and asbestosis. This is true even though the condition may not have developed until many years after they retired from the railroad. You must file your case in court within 3 years from when you know or should know you have a job related disease. If the employee has died, suit must be filed within 3 years of his death. If pursuing this type of claim you should seek out an attorney who has a history of experience with FELA asbestos claims.

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For more information about all IBEW Designated FELA Legal Counsel nationwide and the DLC program, please visit the IBEW website at www.IBEW.org, and then access the Railroad Department.