

TOXIC TORTS AND PRODUCTS LIABILITY

Sheppard Mullin attorneys have a long history of representing manufacturers and product distributors in products liability and toxic tort cases in federal and state courts throughout the United States. Products liability cases involve claims that personal injuries were caused by a product's defective design, manufacture and/or warnings. In toxic tort litigation the plaintiffs claim they were injured from exposure to allegedly hazardous materials.

Representative Industries:

Our attorneys have tried or otherwise resolved products liability cases involving a wide array of industries, including:

- Asbestos
- Aviation
- Compressors, valves, presses, turbines and other industrial equipment
- Environmental controls and fire alarms
- Food products
- Garden tractors and lawn mowers
- Gas ranges
- Hair dryers
- Heaters
- Medical devices
- Motor vehicles and automotive parts
- Petroleum products
- Pharmaceuticals
- Refrigerators and refrigeration systems
- Shower heads
- Sprinkler manufacturers
- Stoves
- Tobacco products
- Vitamin mixers
- Water heaters

Representative clients:

- Abbott Laboratories
- Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO)
- American Honda of North America
- Axia, Inc.
- Baxter Healthcare
- Chevron Texaco
- Chrysler Corporation
- Continental Airlines
- ESCO Corporation
- Ford Motor Company
- General Motors Corporation
- Hamilton-Sundstrand Corporation
- Heidelberg USA, Inc.
- Holley Performance Products
- Honeywell Inc.
- Hussmann Corporation
- Moen Corporation
- Nordstrom, Inc.
- Northrop Grumman
- Pan American Airlines
- Philip Morris Companies, Inc.

- Ralston Purina
- Sanofi-Winthrop
- Schering Plough
- Tenneco Automotive, Inc.
- The Gillette Company
- United Technologies Corporation
- Venoco, Inc.
- Westburne Supply Co.
- White Consolidated Industries

Representative Matters:

- Represented Kraft Foods in matters involving allegations of foreign substances in food products
- Represented White Consolidated Industries, and its subsidiaries, in matters involving refrigerators, gas ranges, water heaters, lawn mowers and garden tractors
- Represented Copes-Vulcan, Inc. (a subsidiary of White Consolidated Industries), in lawsuit involving the failure of a "variable orifice desuperheater," aka "steam attemperator," at the Moss Landing, CA, PG&E power plant
- Represented Ford Motor Company, Chrysler and General Motors in products liability cases ranging from allegations of defective seats, restraints, airbags, crashworthiness, post-collision fuel fed fires, brake failures, roll-overs, and the like
- Represented Sanofi-Winthrop, Schering-Plough, Baxter Healthcare, and Caremark in matters ranging from alleged adverse reactions, including death (liver necrosis), from the ingestion of prescribed pharmaceuticals, allegedly non-disclosed side effects (bone necrosis from use of nasal inhaler containing cortico-steroid)
- Represented Chrysler in several friction asbestos matters brought by plaintiffs suffering from lung cancer, mesothelioma, allegedly resulting from asbestos exposure
- Represented Chevron, Tenneco Automotive, Gillette and Heidelberg U.S.A. in various asbestos cases
- Represented Philip Morris in the defense of matters brought by individuals who claim that smoking resulted in such conditions as lung cancer and strokes
- Represented Continental Airlines in litigation against McDonnell Douglas Corporation arising out of the crash of a DC-10 jetliner
- Represented Pam American in litigation arising out of the Tenerife crash and several other airlines and airplane manufacturers in crash litigation
- Representing Venoco, Inc. in massive toxic tort action in complex litigation in Los Angeles Superior Court in which nearly 1,000 current and former high school claiming injuries from exposure to over 140 chemicals from the oil drilling sites and an energy production facility
- Represented Mattel, Inc. in numerous actions brought by employees and outside parties alleging injuries to exposure to chemicals in manufacturing, as well as sick building syndrome
- Represented medium sized building (real estate) owner in action for sick building syndrome
- Represented Hughes Aircraft, Raytheon and Northrop Grumman in numerous actions for alleged exposure to chemicals used in manufacturing at facilities
- Represented Lockheed in aircraft craft cases involving L-188 aircraft
- Represented Sundstrand Corporation in air conditioner explosion case and in plastic pipe and valve cases
- Represented General Dynamics in litigation involving power press accidents and in case involving crash of a Marine YF 4
- Represented major plumbing products distributor in products liability case alleging defective showerheads and successfully persuaded foreign manufacturer to indemnify distributor for all legal fees and other costs.
- Represented Beacon Oil Co. in toxic cleanup litigation
- Represented German companies in propane refrigerator death cases and fabric press injury cases
- Represented Vogt Valve in metal valve failure litigation
- Represented Southern California Gas Co. in pipeline cases
- Represented Sullair in litigation involving industrial compressors

Recalls and Regulatory Investigations:

Litigation exposure can be substantially decreased through prompt recall of dangerous or defective products from the marketplace. Our attorneys structure and oversee product recalls and interface with agencies, as necessary, during the recall process. We also have handled litigation arising out of the process.

Sheppard Mullin attorneys also represent companies being investigated by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, and counsel companies on the defective product reporting requirements enforced by the Commission.