

Arze and Mollica, LLP – helping the injured

BY CAMILLE SPERRAZZA

We seem to be reading about far too many construction accidents these days.

The Manhattan District Attorney's Office recently filed criminal charges against two construction companies for the death of a 22-year-old worker last April. The companies allegedly ignored warnings issued by inspectors to the site that dangerous conditions existed, and they disregarded federal safety regulations. The excavation of the site went as deep as 14 feet, without the fortification required by both city and federal law for excavations deeper than five feet. Gerald Arze of the law firm, Arze and Mollica LLP says, "Unfortunately, big business and construction sometimes comes ahead of worker safety, and it shouldn't."

Becoming injured in this type of accident — or any type of accident — is painful.

But the legal restitution process shouldn't be — and it won't be — when Arze and Mollica LLP is on your side.

The Brooklyn law firm recently obtained a jury award of more than \$800,000 for an undocumented worker who was injured while performing brick pointing on the roof of a commercial building. He was working within a chimney which was thought to be sealed. Instead, it collapsed, causing the injured worker to fall approximately seven stories down the chimney chute, says Mr. Arze.

The worker suffered a fractured ankle, a fractured scapula, lower back injuries, and fractured ribs. A year later, he underwent an arthroscopic surgery to repair damage sustained to his shoulder. The law office of Arze and Mollica filed a motion on his behalf, requesting that liability be awarded in his favor.

"The building owner failed to provide sufficient safety devices to him at the work site," says Mr. Arze. The court agreed, and declared the building owner was negligent in permitting the work to be done in that fashion, but a jury trial is still always required to determine the amount of compensation which should be awarded under the circumstances, he



Gerald G. Arze and Raymond J. Mollica.

says.

At trial, the building owner's attorneys claimed he recovered from these injuries, and that he could now return to work in the same capacity.

"A one-week jury trial determined that our client be awarded over \$800,000 in damages for past and future pain and suffering, as well as past medical expenses," says Mr. Arze.

When situations like these arise, there are lots of questions that come up, long before any decision is made. For example, people want to know: How long will it take before there's a settlement? Who pays for medical care if you have no insurance?

It can take six months to a few years before a case is resolved, says Mr. Arze. Medical coverage depends upon many factors. If it's a car accident, No Fault is part of every auto insurance policy, but if the accident happened at work, it may be covered by Worker's Compensation.

"If it occurred on someone's premises, there may sometimes be insurance cov-

erage available for medical treatment," says Mr. Arze.

When issues aren't so clear, the services are of an attorney are all the more important.

Mr. Arze says the firm has a strong track record of fighting for what's right.

"Our office is dedicated to protecting the injured against the negligent acts of persons, corporations, businesses, and municipal entities," he says.

If you're not sure if you have a case, consulting an attorney may be intimidating.

"We want to alleviate these types of fears right away," says Mr. Arze. "The initial consultation is always free, and we take all the time necessary to identify your legal issues, and advise if you have a case."

In addition, you will always speak with an attorney — either Mr. Arze himself, or his partner, Raymond Mollica.

Like most personal injury law firms, Arze and Mollica LLP does not get compensated for its time unless it wins your case. Some of the

company's success stories are posted on its website, but one you won't read there involves a car accident where a man suffered a shoulder injury that required surgery.

"The defense lawyers said the injuries were repetitive and work-related injuries," says Arze, and because of that, argued that they did not have to provide compensation. But after one week of trial, Arze and Mollica LLP was able to convince a jury with medical proof that the injuries were caused by the accident. "Our client was awarded \$240,000," says Mr. Arze, who takes pride in these success stories.

"We have established an outstanding reputation of providing top-quality legal services in the field of personal injury," he says. The firm has fought and won cases that have involved automobile accidents, medical malpractice, construction accidents, falls, and more. Sadly, cases involving nursing home care and bed sores are on the rise, he says, and this shouldn't be the situation.

"Bed sores can lead to seri-

ous injuries or death."

To better serve clients, the office does not take on more than it can handle, says Mr. Arze.

"This way, we can be personally involved." Clients are kept aware of the case progress, too, and calls are returned promptly, he says.

Both attorneys worked for high-profile law firms before deciding to open Arze and Mollica LLP in 2007. Mr. Arze is an active participant in the New York State Trial Lawyers Association and the Brooklyn Bar Association. He is fluent in Spanish and English.

Mr. Mollica is a member of the Columbian Lawyers Association, Brooklyn Bar Association, and the New York Trial Lawyers Association.

Arze and Mollica LLP [2352 80th St. between 23rd and Stillwell avenues in Bensonhurst, (718) 996-5600, www.ArzeMollicaLaw.com]. Open Mondays through Fridays, 9 am-5 pm.

[39 Broadway, Ste. 950 between Morris Street and Exchange Alley in the Financial District]. By appointment only.