



PRODUCT LIABILITY & COMPLEX TORTS WEBINAR

IS SAFETY OPTIONAL IN THE AGE OF THE REPTILE THEORY?

DATE:

Thursday, February 17, 2022

TIME:

12:00pm – 1:00pm Central Time

ABOUT THIS WEBINAR:

A product manufacturer's decision to provide a safety device as standard equipment or make it an option to purchase can be complicated. Defending optional safety device claims can be challenging, particularly in an era of reptile theory tactics where juries believe "safety is number one" and not an "option." Don't get bit. This panel will dissect the current law, explore real-world examples, and provide key insights and takeaways on defending these optional safety device claims.

MODERATOR:

ROBERT MULLINS is a trial lawyer with Gibson, McAskill & Crosby, LLP, the ALFA International member firm in Buffalo, New York. He joined the firm in December 2001. His practice includes toxic tort defense, strict product liability defense, general insurance and trucking industry defense, industrial and construction accident defense, and municipal defense throughout New York State. Robert is the lead trial counsel for a national automotive manufacturer throughout upstate New York, and he is routinely admitted (pro hac) as trial counsel outside of New York in asbestos litigation. Prior to joining his firm, he served three years in the US Army JAG Corps. Robert is a graduate of the State University of New York at Geneseo. He received his JD from the University of Akron, School of Law, where he was a member of the Akron Law Review.

PRESENTERS:

BILL ELLISON serves as Vice President, Associate General Counsel for Lowe's Companies, Inc. Bill joined Lowe's in 2014 and is responsible for overseeing general liability litigation, legal technology and the organization's insurance program. He has more than 25 years of extensive litigation, risk mitigation and management experience. He served most recently as Assistant General Counsel. Previously, he served as Senior Counsel. Before joining Lowe's, he served as a Managing Partner of The McIntosh Law Firm. He led a broad practice, including jury trials, focused on complex commercial disputes, insurance, product liability and torts. Bill earned a BBA from Campbell University and a JD from Campbell's Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law. He also serves as the officer/secretary of Lowe's Foundation.

CHRIS GERGES serves as CEO for Euchner USA and Safe-T-Sense. He studied electrical engineering at TTU and has an Executive MBA from NIU. He sees himself as thinking most of the time as an engineer. Chris has been in the machine safety field for 14 years. He started his career as an application engineer for Euchner USA, supporting technical products in the automotive industry. Chris received a TUV Functional safety-engineering certificate from TUV Rheinland, participated in ANSI safety committees and was an expert witness on cases. From a personal perspective, Chris likes reading, traveling, biking, basketball and swimming.

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RAY MOORE is a Shareholder of Murphy & Grantland, P.A., the ALFA International member firm in Columbia, South Carolina. He is a litigator with 25 years of experience defending product manufacturers, retailers, and sellers and other parties involving significant and catastrophic injuries allegedly caused by defective products, ranging from appliances, batteries and candles all the way to ziplines. He is AV-rated by Martindale Hubbell and has been annually recognized on the “Super Lawyers” list in South Carolina since 2016. Ray obtained his BA from The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina, in 1993, where he served as the Corps’ Regimental Commander and Honor Court Chair. He earned his JD from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1996 and served on the editorial board of the South Carolina Law Review. Ray is also a certified mediator and arbitrator. In his personal life, Ray loves his family and sports, preferably together, with a son finishing his college football career and three daughters involved in high school sports. Ray recently began a late-in-life enjoyment of obstacle course racing as a new way to stay fit.