

Refinery Accident

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I was injured in a plant or refinery explosion, what comes next?

The devastating aftermath of an industrial explosion is an experience we do not wish on any worker or family member. It is highly encouraged that you do not hesitate to get the involvement of an experienced plant explosion lawyer at a time such as this to explain what you are facing and to give you a better understanding of the process that you will have to go through. Brooks Harrison – Attorneys at Law is fully aware of the confusion that often surrounds these types of claims and we are prepared to go the distance in our efforts to provide accessible and honest assistance when it is needed most.

If I am injured what is the first thing that I should do?

The very first thing that you do regardless of anything else is to immediately seek medical attention. Even if you feel “fine,” you could be experiencing the adrenaline and not be fully aware of injuries. In some cases, the injuries could manifest weeks later. You need to make sure that you take care of yourself by seeing a medical professional. After that, it is important to get the involvement of a knowledgeable industrial accident attorney to help you assess the situation and determine whether or not you have a claim.

If my spouse was in a plant explosion and suffered PTSD, do I have a claim?

Not every injury that is sustained from a plant explosion will be physical in nature. Over the years, the true effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) have begun to be noticed and have made a significant impact on the community. If your spouse has a severe case of PTSD after an explosion, you could have grounds to file a claim and seek to recover damages. The best way to know for sure is to consult Brooks Harrison – Attorneys at Law, PLLC.

Do I have to hire a lawyer that the union recommends to me?

It entirely possible that after you have been involved in an industrial accident that your union will recommend a lawyer for you to hire. You do not have to work with that attorney. In some cases, this is a helpful referral, but it is not mandatory. “Union firms” get a lot of business by working closely with the unions and their relationship may not be to your advantage. Do your research and hire a lawyer that you’re comfortable working with - not just what the union is pressuring you to do.

Should I see another doctor or just the one provided through workers’ compensation?

In some cases, if you see a doctor other than the one that is chosen by your workers’ compensation insurance carrier, your benefits may be terminated or you could be suspended for what is known as non-compliance. This, however, is not to say that you cannot seek a second opinion - it may just come out of pocket. To determine the best course of action and what is best for your claim, talk to a lawyer who will be able to explain your state specific laws and how they affect your choice in doctor.



If I am experiencing long term effects that I think are related to an old plant explosion. What should I do?

In some cases, toxins that are released from a plant explosion can cause contamination to the ground-water and the dirt in a local community. In these cases, residents can suffer from long-term exposure to possible carcinogens and can later begin to suffer from the affects. If you feel this is your case, it is highly encouraged that you get the involvement of a local attorney to help you pursue a case. This will be complicated because of the complex statute of limitations, but it is not an impossible case to pursue and should be done as soon as possible.

What should I do if I want to change attorneys and have Brooks Harrison - Attorneys at Law represent me?

Brooks Harrison – Attorneys at Law, PLLC will not ever interfere with the attorney-client contractual relationship between you and your current attorney. We will only be able to ethically discuss your case once you notify your current attorney in writing that you no longer want him or her to represent you on your case.

What is “local counsel” and does Brooks Harrison - Attorneys at Law act as “local counsel”?

A “local counsel” is an attorney hired to assist the primary attorney with a case outside of the primary attorneys home county. The “local counsel” should provide the primary attorney with expertise of a particular court’s policies and rules as well as local knowledge regarding the attitudes of the community. Brooks Harrison – Attorneys at Law, PLLC often serves as “local counsel” in Galveston and Harris County courts. “Local counsel” fees depend on the amount of involvement and do not affect the amount of the fee paid by the client.

What is a deposition and what is involved?

Generally, the plaintiff can expect to have his or her deposition taken by the defense attorney(s). This means that the attorney(s) representing the parties sued in your lawsuit will have the opportunity to ask you questions under oath before the case goes to trial. Brooks Harrison – Attorneys at

Law, PLLC attorneys make sure that you are fully prepared and familiar with the process before it begins. An attorney will be with you for your entire deposition to ensure that the deposition is conducted in a fair and proper manner.

What are interrogatories and why do I need to complete them?

Interrogatories are usually the first discovery tool used in a case. They are questions presented by one side to the other which must be answered under oath within a period specified by the court’s procedural rules. Complete and accurate answers are very important in response to any discovery question, and the attorneys and staff at Brooks Harrison – Attorneys at Law, PLLC will work with you to make sure everything is handled properly.

What is an expert witness and how much do they cost?

An expert witness is an individual who has some specialized knowledge in a specific area that the common person does not have. In many cases handled by Brooks Harrison – Attorneys at Law, PLLC, expert testimony is required by law. Experts do charge for their time and expertise in any given field. However, like all other legal costs, the firm advances these expenses and you do not reimburse Brooks Harrison – Attorneys at Law, PLLC until and unless recovery is made in your case.

What happens if I do not want a court trial?

Your attorney will negotiate the best possible settlement of your case and recommend to you whether or not to accept the offer under the circumstances.

Do I have to attend court throughout my trial?

Generally, Yes, with exception in only very extreme cases and circumstances based on medical necessity.

How long will my trial last?

Each and every case is different. The length of your trial depends on many factors, some of them include the number of witnesses to testify, the number of parties to the suit, number of exhibits to introduce into evidence and the court's schedule.

How much is my case worth?

This question cannot be answered before the case is investigated and each case must be evaluated on an individual basis. Brooks Harrison – Attorneys at Law, PLLC is experienced in evaluating cases and will give their opinion after a full investigation has been completed. However, an exact dollar amount or a guarantee will not be given at any time.

How much will legal representation cost me? Brooks Harrison – Attorneys at Law, PLLC takes all personal injury cases on a contingency fee basis. This means we do not bill our clients by the hour for legal representation. The firm only gets paid its fee and reimbursement of expenses when a recovery is made in your case. If no recovery is made, no fees or expenses are paid.

How do I get to the courthouse and where do I park?

When it is time for you to go to the courthouse, we will make sure you know where to go, how to get there, and where to park.

What sort of clothes should I wear to court?

As a general rule, it is best to dress in such a way to show respect for the court. This usually means a suit or coat and tie. However, in some counties, slacks or pants and a clean, pressed shirt are acceptable. Jeans, shorts, tank tops, t-shirts and sandals should NEVER be worn to court.

Can I talk in court?

No. You may ONLY speak to your attorney, except when testifying and when asked a question by the judge.

Why shouldn't I speak to members of the jury?

Everyone except the court's bailiff is prohibited from speaking with the jurors. This includes offerings of food, drinks, gum, sweaters, coats, and the like, and applies to everyone – all parties, attorneys and their assistants, witnesses, spectators, etc.

When will I receive my money?

It depends. If your case has been settled, your settlement can be paid only after the settlement papers have been signed and the funds have been deposited into a trust account. If a law suit must be filed, it may be 18 months or more before a settlement can be achieved or a jury award obtained. Even then, the losing party may appeal the jury's decision, which may mean it will take longer for you to receive your award.

Is it a settlement or a regular monthly payment?

Sometimes, but in very limited cases. Some clients prefer to have their settlements paid in one lump sum, while others prefer to receive their settlement checks monthly or yearly. Feel free to consult with Brooks Harrison – Attorneys at Law, PLLC on this issue.



BROOKS HARRISON - ATTYS AT LAW PLLC
675 Bering Drive Suite 850
Houston, Tx 77057
(877) 402-6658
www.BrooksHarrison.com

About Us

About Brooks T. Harrison



Brooks Harrison is well known to the refinery industry as a tough, energetic, victims advocate. His successful history litigating personal injury has made him a sought-after advocate for those injured in refinery accidents.

Brooks T. Harrison is a proud supporter of public policies advancing the cause of working families. He is a Friend of Labor to the Texas AFL-CIO; a life member of the NAACP; member of LULAC; member of NORML; honored as a “Man of Honor and Distinction” by the Galveston County, Texas – Mainland Chapter NAACP in 2007; member of the American Association for Justice; and a life member of the University of Houston Alumni Association. Brooks lives in Houston with his two sons, Brooks, II and Noah. Brooks routinely is a volunteer baseball. In his free time, Brooks enjoys travel, baseball, basketball, boating, live music, politics, and practicing law.

Brooks Harrison has worked for several of the top law firms in the State of Texas and firms renowned throughout the United States as well as partnered or founded two successful law firms himself. Brooks has earned a reputation for taking on the “difficult” cases and prevailing on behalf of his clients.

Education

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW,
Houston, Texas
Juris Doctor

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON, Houston,
Texas
B.S., Political Science

Affiliations

- State Bar of Texas, Admitted Member
- Federal Southern District, 5th Circuit, Admitted

Bar Admissions

- Texas

Contact Information

Email: brooks@brooksharrison.com

Phone: (877) 402-6658

Address:

675 Bering Drive, Suite 850
Houston, TX 77057

www.BrooksHarrison.com