

Jury gives \$5 million for fatal Menifee crash caused by bad tire

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Aidan McGloin

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Leo Serrano-Loera lost his son when a Mack truck’s trailer tire blew out on Aug. 1, 2022, causing a crash on the 215.

On Aug. 28, a jury awarded him damages of \$5 million, finding that the commercial operators of the truck did not maintain the tire or properly check tire pressure as required by law.

Attorneys for defendants Olson Precast Company did not respond to requests to comment.

Attorney Molly McKibben, who brought the case for Serrano-Loera, said that the tire was drastically under pressure.

Under California law, truck drivers have to check the air pressure of each tire with a pressure gauge before trips. The driver recorded taking only 20 minutes to check the pressure of each of the 18 tires, and did so by hitting the tires with a stick, McKibben said.

“I think, more than the money, the 0% finding of liability on (Leo Serrano) was the most important thing. Because Mr. Serrano not only lost his son, but he spent three years with this company blaming him, saying he did something wrong, that caused his son’s death,” said McKibben.



McKibben said she spent closing argument on choices. Olson Precast chose to become a motor carrier, and in doing so, signed up for certain rules, she said.

“Our client was not given a choice. He was just headed to work, talking with his son, having his morning coffee,” McKibben said.

Serrano-Loera is a form setting carpenter. He was going with with his son Hector to a job site when the tire blew out next to him. His shoulder was injured by the crash as well. Still, he goes to work, and will continue to do so until his body gives out, McKibben said. He is now joined at his worksites by his two other sons.

“I think, this is just, the hope is that a verdict like this will encourage trucking companies to take these safety instructions far more seriously.”

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