

Court Awards Injured Raytheon Worker \$740,000

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A 56 year old woman whose right arm was cut off by a milling machine at Raytheon Corp in Andover has been awarded \$740,000 by a Federal jury in Boston.

Irene Sewade of North Andover, employed in the drill room of the Raytheon plant for 20 years, received one of the largest settlements ever awarded for such an injury to a Merrimack Valley resident.

Mrs. Sewade sued the company that made the milling machine - Kearney & Trucker Corp. of Milwaukee, Wis. Under state law an employee cannot sue an employer.

"I'm glad this is finally over," said Mrs. Sewade, a widow and mother of two sons. "It took a long time, but I'm happy with the result."

According to the lawsuit, on Jan. 12, 1979, at 3 p.m., Mrs Sewade reached up to shut off the milling machine at Raytheon when her right hand was caught by the spinning blade. It was cut off just below the elbow.

An unsuccessful attempt was made to re-attach the arm at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston. She was never able to return to work.

Shortly after the accident, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) fined Raytheon \$750 for not properly guarding the machine and for allowing employees to operate a defective design. After the OSHA action, Raytheon placed guards over the blades.

Attorneys for Kearney & Trucker blame the accident on Mrs. Sewade's conduct and Raytheon's failure to adequately guard the machine. The defense said that because of the many uses the machine can be put to, the manufacturer could not have provided adequate guarding when the machine in question was sold to the west Andover plant in 1957.

"A number of alternative, state of the art designs were available in 1957 and any one of them would have prevented Mrs. Sewade's tragedy." her attorney, Fred Halstrom of Boston told the jury.

Mrs. Sewade filed for Workman's Compensation and \$114,000 was sent to Raytheon through Liberty Mutual Insurance, but she has not received any money from Raytheon, said her second attorney, Stephen Wight of Lawrence.

"In other words," Wight said, "as a result of the settlement, Raytheon has paid no funds whatsoever to Irene Sewade."

