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## La. Court Denies Defense Motion for More Definite Statement in Benzene Case

NEW ORLEANS — A Louisiana federal court has denied a defense motion for a more definite statement in a benzene case, ruling that the specificity sought by the defendants is not required.

In the March 16 order, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana rejected defense efforts to have the plaintiffs detail what facilities at which the plaintiff worked, the names of his employers, the dates of employment, and the precise work that her performed.

“Rule 8 simply does not require the specificity requested by the defendants,” the court opined.

Karen Deffes filed her lawsuit on behalf of Raymond Deffes, saying that he developed non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma as a result of exposure to benzene.

Deffes worked as an electrician, Karen Deffes said in the complaint, for a number of companies for more than 20 years. Karen Deffes contended in the lawsuit that during his time as an electrician, Raymond Deffes regularly came into contact with benzene-containing products at Shell Oil and Shell Chemical facilities.

Deffes died in Dec. 2014, the lawsuit said.

“While working as an electrician from 1965 through 1989 Mr. Deffes was exposed daily to high levels of benzene when he repaired or replaced electrical equipment, rusted or damaged equipment, tied in new electrical equipment while performing turnarounds, and worked on new construction jobs at the defendants’ facilities,” the lawsuit explained. “He was also exposed to high levels of benzene from products manufactured, distributed or sold by the defendants.”

The defendants contested the level of detail in the complaint, asking the court to issue an order for a more definite statement.

In its recent order, however, the federal court said that the plaintiff “sets forth the elements of each claim in detail.”

“The ... additional information the defendants demand the plaintiff allege is a question of discovery,” the court concluded.

The plaintiffs in all three cases are represented by L. Eric Williams of the Williams Law Office LLC in Metairie, La.

Deffes v. Shell Oil Co., et al., No. 15-51 (E.D. La.).

Document is Available Call (800) 496-4319 or Search [www.harrismartin.com](http://www.harrismartin.com) Order and Reasons Ref# BEN-1503-20

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