

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FAMILIES OF WAIKELE FIREWORKS' EXPLOSION VICTIMS FILE SUITS

HONOLULU – The families of five men who were killed in a fiery explosion on April 8, 2011, are filing multiple lawsuits in state court this week, alleging that a number of local and mainland companies were negligent or reckless in allowing hazardous work to be performed in an unsafe manner.

The five men, ranging in age from 24 to 50, were employees of Donaldson Enterprises, Inc. and were working in a bunker at an area known as the Waikele Caves. The explosion occurred while the men were dismantling illegal fireworks to prepare for the fireworks' destruction at a different site. The explosion hurled debris 150 feet from the entrance to the bunker.

Donaldson Enterprises had been hired by VSE Corporation, a Delaware corporation, to dispose of the illegal fireworks.

The lawsuits seek unspecified damages, including punitive damages.

The victims who died in the fireworks explosion are:

Bryan Dean Cabalce
Robert Freeman
Justin Joseph Keli'i
Robert Leahey
Neil Sprankle

George Keli'i, the grandfather of Justin Keli'i, summed up the tragedy by stating, "We just want justice."

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