

“KEEPING PACE” - #73

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EXPERIMENTS



GATE ARM AT HOSPITAL PARKING GARAGE:

The plaintiff claimed this gate at the ticket booth in a parking garage for a Cincinnati hospital caused a permanent disability when it hit him on the head as he walked under it (in violation of posted warnings). The plaintiff attorney used an expert who read written materials four feet thick, and then claimed the parking gate had malfunctioned without ever examining it.

Service records demonstrated that the gate never needed to be repaired after this incident. This led me to believe it could not have malfunctioned. To demonstrate the small amount of force exerted by the gate arm as it lowers, I let the gate arm come down onto my shoulder a number of times. There was no pain.

The case settled when it got to court, for a very low amount.

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HOSPITAL SLIDING GLASS DOORS:

The above case reminds me of another case which involved the automatic sliding glass doors at a hospital emergency room in Lexington, Kentucky. An elderly man with an injured hip fell as he walked through these doors, fracturing his other hip. The plaintiff attorney was asking for \$3 million when the case went to trial.

I showed a video in which I placed my head between the sliding glass doors and actually let the doors close on my head. This experiment demonstrated how little force the doors have when they close. A defense verdict was granted.

ELECTRICAL OUTLET:

A defense case was won near Cleveland, Ohio in which an electrical expert claimed an element of an electrical outlet caused a fire due to “overcurrent” in the outlet. This was in spite of the fact that the man who died in the fire was known to be inebriated and was known to usually sit and smoke in the chair located at the area of origin.

Moreover, this expert found the electrical outlet in a pile of debris behind the building three years after the fire. I performed a test in which I filled a junction box containing an outlet with cotton balls. Then I drew 36 amperes of current through the outlet for one hour, while I videotaped the test. The cotton balls were not even scorched, and the plastic in the outlet never melted, let alone caught fire.

My client attorney told me that the jury members and the judge told her I have a very good way of explaining things, including electrical theory, in a simplified manner which they could easily comprehend.

Sincerely,



Frederick F. Franklin, P.E.
Forensic Engineer