

## Settlement near for families of men killed in radio tower accident

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A Decatur crane company will soon pay a \$6 million settlement to the families of two men who died in 2010 after falling from a McClellan radio tower, an attorney for one of the families said.

Birmingham attorney David Marsh said Monday that Barnhart Crane and Rigging Co., Inc. of Decatur, had agreed to a \$6 million settlement last month in a lawsuit for the wrongful deaths of Jonce Hubble, 41 and Barry Sloan, 37 of Albertville.

"There are still some release documents that have to be filed ... I expect the final court approval within the next couple of weeks," Marsh said.

The Star's attempts to reach the attorney for Barnhart Crane Monday evening were unsuccessful.

Marsh, who represented Hubble's family in the lawsuit, said his clients would receive half of the settlement while Sloan's family would receive the other half.

Marsh said the families would soon receive their settlements. Hubble was the father of four children, and Sloan had four children as well.

The lawsuit alleged the deaths were due to the company's negligence. Marsh said the company agreed to settle a week before the lawsuit's scheduled trial date in early December.

"We felt it was a fair settlement for everyone involved," Marsh said. "It was a product of the facts that developed, the law and the lengthy negotiations."

The lawsuit against Barnhart Crane and Rigging, filed in July 2010, alleged an employee for the company was operating a bucket truck on July 22 when it struck a supporting wire, causing the tower Hubble and Sloan were working on to collapse. Hubble and Sloan were working for McCord Communications of Anniston.

The tower was located near Alps Road at McClellan and was part of a system that provides communication to personnel at Pelham Range through the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program.

According to Anniston Police Department reports, a vehicle accidentally struck a guy-wire, causing the tower to fall. The victims fell an estimated 40 feet. Sloan was pronounced dead at the scene while Hubble was airlifted to UAB hospital, where he died later that evening.

"We feel good that we've been able to help the families," Marsh said. "It's just an awful tragedy that led to this."

Attempts to reach a representative for the Sloan family were

unsuccessful Monday.

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