

\$4,650,000

Gas Grill Explosion
PREMISES LIABILITY

FACTS: Plaintiff was living in an apartment building which had common area amenities including a natural gas grill. Plaintiff had not used the grill because her husband did the grilling. In mid-March, 2020, the building closed all of the common area amenities at the building to promote social distancing related to Covid-19. The maintenance supervisor closed the valve for the main gas supply to the grill. The valve was located several hundred feet away from the grill. He then removed the flexible gas connector from the shutoff valve under the grill. He claims that he posted a sign on the grill indicating it was closed. Plaintiff's husband had to take a call for work so Plaintiff decided to light the grill for him. When Plaintiff attempted to light the grill, it would not light. She opened the access door beneath the grill and she opened the gas supply valve under the grill without noticing that the flexible gas connector had been removed. She then attempted to light the grill and there was an explosion.

CONTENTIONS: Plaintiff contended that the maintenance supervisor did not drain the residual gas from the line when he closed the gas supply to the grill - therefore when Plaintiff opened the gas valve under the grill, the residual gas in the line flowed into the space under the grill. Plaintiff also contended there was no sign indicating that the grill was closed and the sign was put up after the incident. Defendant contended Plaintiff's lease contained an express waiver which applied to all building amenities including the grill. Defendant claimed there were signs in numerous places at the building indicating that all common area amenities were closed due to Covid-19. Defendant also claimed that Plaintiff should have noticed that the flexible gas connector beneath the grill was removed when she opened the gas valve under the grill.

INJURIES: 39 year old with second and third degree burns to lower legs and feet requiring skin graft to right foot.

FREITAS v. LPF TRIANA, INC. ET AL.
CASE NUMBER: 20STCV20576
LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT