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Driver Ordered to Pay \$2M in Cell-Phone Fatality

A former lawyer accused of talking on her cell phone when she struck and killed a teenager with her Mercedes has been ordered to pay \$2 million by a Virginia jury, the Washington Post reports.

The jury ordered Jane Wagner to compensate the family of Naeun Yoon after a judge found Wagner liable for the teenager's death. The lawsuit included allegations that Wagner was talking on her cell phone with a client when she struck the teenager with her car in 2000.

Cooley Godward LLP, which was named as a defendant and was Wagner's employer at the time of the incident, had already settled the lawsuit for an undisclosed amount, the attorney for Yoon's father tells the newspaper.

Wagner has served one year in jail after pleading guilty to leaving the scene of an accident. After the conviction, she forfeited her license to practice law, according to the newspaper.

A number of lawsuits have targeted employers whose employees have been accused of being involved in car accidents while making business-related calls, the newspaper notes.

While no federal law prohibits the use of cell phones while driving, some states and municipalities have passed legislation to ban handheld mobile phone use while driving.

In addition, some companies, such as ExxonMobil, have barred employees from using handheld devices while driving on company business.

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