

# Mark William Fraser files lawsuit against Middlemount Coal

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A pump crew operator is suing a Central Queensland mine for \$1.22 million for a lower back injury he suffered over time while lifting pipes for welding that weighed more than 120kg.

Mark William Fraser has filed a \$1,220,837.21 lawsuit in the Rockhampton Supreme Court against Middlemount Coal.

The 36-year-old Mildura man felt a sharp, shooting pain in his back as he travelled to Middlemount Mine with a work colleague on May 14, 2019 and was in severe pain, according to Mr Fraser's statement of claim.

Mr Fraser was a part of the Pump Crew at Middlemount Mine and responsible for butt welding large plastic pipes together for the transport of water in and around the mine.



Middlemount Mine. Picture: Supplied

He claimed the pipes that had to be welded were hard pipes that weighed more than 120kg and were always on the ground and that the Hiab truck and crane used to lift the pipes were constantly breaking down, resulting in the pipes having to be lifted by hand for welding.

Mr Fraser claimed he and the leading hand were also regularly required to lift either eight inch or six inch lay-flat-piping in 100 metre lengths on the back of a utility.

He claimed he and the leading hand would also have to regularly manually-team-lift four inch pumps together which weighed more than 120kg.

Mr Fraser further claimed he would have to regularly walk heavy pipes with a sling while other Pump Crew operators were driving the pipes, which was physically demanding on his back and shoulders.

He also claimed the Isuzu truck with the Hiab on the truck tray had a bench seat for the passenger which caused him great discomfort as he travelled throughout the mine.

Mr Fraser claimed he suffered a lower back injury.

He claimed Middlemount Coal failed to provide a safe system of work and should have had appropriate manual and mechanical systems to assist with pump crew duties and a suitable vehicle to undertake the work.

A defence has not been filed.

Swanwick Murray Roche, who are representing Mr Fraser, and Middlemount Coal were contacted for comment but did not respond by time of publication.