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Family of man killed in tractor-trailer crash settles suit for \$1.5M

■ BY BILL CRESENZO

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The family of a Bluffton man who was killed after he slammed into a tractor-trailer that was backing into a driveway has settled a lawsuit against the truck's owner for \$1.5 million, the family's attorney reports.

William Applegate of Yarborough Applegate in Charleston reports that Robert and Karen Roehl were traveling south on U.S. 17, a four-lane road divided by a grass median, near Adams Run around 7 p.m. on Oct 21, 2017.

At the same time, a tractor-trailer owned by Low Country Real Estate was driving north, and the driver pulled the tractor-trailer on the median in order to back up into a driveway on the southbound side. The driver blocked both lanes of traffic with his vehicle, Applegate said, and the Roehls crashed into the truck because they couldn't stop in time.

The crash destroyed the driver's side and front side of the passenger vehicle. Robert Roehl died several hours



William Applegate

later, while Karen Roehl suffered significant and permanent injuries and is still recovering, Applegate said. There was \$1 million in liability coverage related to the tractor-trailer, and the defendant was insolvent, Applegate said. The carrier tendered the policy limits. The Roehls also carried underinsured coverage of \$400,000, and Karen Roehl received the \$100,000 limits of her husband's bodily injury policy.

"Clearly, this tragic case is one which demonstrates the inadequacy of insurance related to many companies doing business in our state, and also underscores the importance for everyone to carry as much UIM coverage as possible," Applegate said.

Francis Ervin of Rogers, Townsend & Thomas in Charleston represented the defendant. Ervin could not

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There

SETTLEMENT REPORT — AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT

Amount: \$1.5 million

Injuries alleged: Wrongful death, left hip fracture, right ankle fracture

Case name: *Karen Roehl, individually and as PR for the Estate of Robert Walter Roehl v. Low Country Real Estate Services and John Grover Reynolds*

Court: Colleton County Circuit Court

Case No.: 2018-CP-15-00188

Date of settlement: Dec. 3, 2018

Attorney for plaintiffs: William Applegate of Yarborough Applegate in Charleston

Attorney for defendants: Francis Ervin of Rogers, Townsend & Thomas in Charleston

be reached for comment on the settlement.

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