

Man Needles Burger King over Dangerous Burger

JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — A Hawaii-based soldier says he got something dangerous with his burger, fries and soda when he ordered a Burger King value meal.

Army Staff Sgt. Clark Bartholomew claims he was injured by needles when he bit into a Triple Stacker on Dec. 1 from a Burger King located on Schofield Barracks, a sprawling Army base in central Oahu.

According to a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in Honolulu this week, Bartholomew took the meal home and while eating the hamburger, he bit into the needle that pierced his tongue and made him bleed. He was hospitalized and put on bed rest for six days after another needle was found lodged in his small intestine.

The lawsuit said Bartholomew suffered "severe physical injury, including injuries to his stomach, rectum and tongue" because of Burger King's negligence. He also suffered "anxiety, fear, loss of sleep, extreme distress and lost wages."

Bartholomew's Haleiwa attorney, Paul Saccoccio, said Friday that the soldier joined the Army after retiring from the Pentagon Police Department in 2007. Bartholomew was outside the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001.

"He saw the plane strike and he was there during the entire period," Saccoccio said. "He served this country. He's a humble man. He unfortunately is placed in a position where he has to seek justice in the courts."

A manager at a the Kolekole Avenue franchise where Bartholomew bought the value meal declined to comment Friday, and a spokesman for Miami-based Burger King Corp. said he couldn't immediately comment.

The Army & Air Force Exchange Service, which owns the restaurant, is aware of the complaint and reviewing the matter, spokesman Judd Anstey said. The exchange operates more than 3,000 stores, restaurants and services on military installations nationwide and abroad.

The exchange is not a defendant in the lawsuit because Bartholomew is awaiting the outcome of his administrative claim with the government, according to a report by the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, which reported on the lawsuit Friday.

Bartholomew's wife, Tanya, and young son, Aric, are also listed as plaintiffs in the complaint. The lawsuit said they witnessed the "grievous injury from eating the hamburger containing needles."

The lawsuit notes there have been previous injuries from foreign objects, including needles, in Burger King's hamburgers.

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