

The Goretzka Case

Allegheny Energy sued over Irwin woman's death

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Associated Press

Lawyer Wants Probe of Power Lines After Pennsylvania Death

The attorney for the surviving family of a western Pennsylvania woman killed by a downed power line wants the state Public Utility Commission to investigate the way utility workers were instructed to clean its lines.

Attorney Shanin Specter is suing West Penn Power and related entities, claiming he's taken depositions from maintenance workers who say they were trained to clean power lines with knives and other tools instead of wire brushes which – the attorney and the power line's manufacturer say – is the only way to keep the lines from rusting through and failing.

West Penn isn't commenting, the PUC says it's looking into Specter's claims.

The attorney took the depositions in a lawsuit filed in the June 2009 death of Carrie Goretzka, who was badly burned when a line fell in her yard in Irwin.