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RENO, Nev. - A federal jury awarded \$52 million in damages Friday to the family of a young Nevada boy who was killed nearly 10 years ago when a Ford pickup truck rolled over him because of a defective parking brake.

Ford Motor Co., which said it plans to appeal, earlier had been ordered to pay as much as \$150.8 million to Jimmie and Ginnie White of Elko, who said in their civil lawsuit that Ford knew about the parking brake defect but didn't warn customers.

The award later was lowered to \$69.1 million and the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco nullified that judgment in 2002, sending the case back to U.S. District Judge David Hagen in Reno because of faulty jury instructions.

The new jury on Friday returned the \$52 million verdict in favor of the Whites, whose 3-year-old son Walter was killed in October 1994.

"I think it is a reasonable and relatively modest number under the circumstances," said [Shanin Specter](#), a lawyer for the Whites.

"Ford has been having these parking brake problems for 10 years with these trucks, these F-series vehicles," he told the Associated Press.

A month after the boy died, Ford recalled 884,000 1992-94 F-series pickup trucks and Broncos, 1993-94 Ranger pickups, Explorers and Mazda Navajo sport utility vehicles to repair the parking brake mechanisms.

But Specter said the recall notice told customers only that the problem with the brakes was that they sometimes would fail to engage initially.

"Ford did not say that after the brake had been engaged it later could disengage spontaneously for no reason. They told the public the reason for the recall was a different, much less significant problem," said Specter of Philadelphia.

"People thought if it did not engage, they could just reapply it. That is merely a customer convenience issue, not a safety issue," he said.

There have been more than 1,100 incidents in which Ford trucks' parking brakes have disengaged spontaneously, resulting in 54 injuries and one death - Walter White of Elko, Specter said.

The Whites received a recall notice in March 1995, after their son Walter had climbed into their 1993 Ford F-350 pickup truck and fell or jumped out. He went under the wheels as it rolled down their driveway.

Ford spokeswoman Kathleen Vokes in Dearborn, Mich., confirmed the company plans to appeal Friday's ruling.

"This was a tragic case but Ford believes that today's result is inconsistent with recent constitutional decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court," Vokes said. She said she was not aware of plans for an additional recall.

Specter said more than 200,000 trucks subject to the recall never were turned in for the repairs.

"This failure to tell the people about the problem is the reason the first jury found the company's conduct to be malicious and why it continues to be felt by this jury that it is malicious. It is a significant continuing public safety issue that needs to be addressed," Specter said.

"The Whites are hopeful that word of this result will be communicated across the country and people will get their trucks into the shop and get them fixed," he said.