



NYC woman files first suit against crane operator after collapse that rained debris down on her while in car

By Priscilla DeGregory

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A New York woman who had debris rain down on her while she was in her car during the dramatic crane collapse in Manhattan last month has filed the first civil case over the traumatic event.

Marcy Olin, 59, “braced herself in terror believing she was going to die” when she heard a loud explosion and looked up to see the crane on fire and plummeting down on July 26 while inside her car at the intersection of Tenth Avenue and West 40th Street, her lawyers with **Kline & Specter, PC** said in a news release.

Olin, of Manhattan, “reasonably and justifiably feared that the collapsing Crane and/or debris from it would cause her bodily harm or kill her,” her Manhattan Supreme Court lawsuit from Wednesday states.

As the giant machine crashed onto Tenth Avenue, Olin “observed, heard, and felt the collapsing crane and other debris crash onto her vehicle,” the suit states.

Olin and her husband, Michael Tierney, are suing several construction companies, crane companies and the operator of the crane, Christopher Van Duyne.

The crane company and Van Duyne had histories of crane-related safety violations and the company had experienced a prior crane failure that resulted in injuries to workers and others, the suit claims.

The fire was sparked because of a worn out hydraulic line on the crane which the company “knew or should” have known about — especially because of a similar 2012 incident involving a crane in Sydney, Australia, the court papers allege.

“We filed today’s lawsuit—which we believe to be the first filed arising from last week’s disaster—to obtain answers to why the 550 Tenth Avenue Project’s crane caught fire and collapsed, to hold accountable those responsible for its collapse, and to seek compensation for our injured clients,” Olin’s lawyer **Patrick Fitzgerald** said in a statement Thursday.

“All of us rightly expect that cranes will be constructed safely, inspected regularly and properly, and operated carefully to avoid disasters such as the one we witnessed in Manhattan last week,” the lawyer said.

Olin and Tierney are suing for unspecified damages.

The crane caught fire 45 stories above the street causing the 180-boom to crash into a neighboring building on its way down to hitting the ground.

A dozen people were hurt but no one was killed and no serious injuries were reported.

The companies and Van Duyne didn’t immediately return requests for comment Thursday.