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St. Louis jury awards \$15 million to mother of man who drowned on Mississippi River

Katie Kull

Mar 15, 2023

ST. LOUIS — A St. Louis jury on Wednesday ordered a marine services company to pay \$15 million to the mother of a worker who slipped, fell into the Mississippi River and drowned in December 2019.

Casey Redmond, 22, had been working for Osage Marine Services on a deck crew for about nine months when he and a supervisor were called out to service a barge around 1:30 a.m. on a cold, dark night, attorneys said.

Redmond's supervisor stepped from their boat onto the barge, which was littered with debris and not equipped with non-slip coating. As Redmond followed, he slipped. The supervisor heard a bang, then a splash, then saw his co-worker in the water. He watched as Redmond floated away then disappeared under their boat, attorneys said. His body has never been found.

Attorneys representing Redmond's mother, Candace Love, argued Osage Marine Services should be held responsible for Redmond's death because workers didn't make sure the barge was clean or safe and didn't try to rescue him after he fell.

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The company admitted in a filing before trial that it was liable but disputed the amount of damages. An attorney declined to comment on the verdict Wednesday.

Love's attorney, Patrick Bader, however, said he believed the jury made the right decision.

"Casey, in my view, deserved better," he said. "I think the jury got that."

Wednesday's verdict is at least the second time in recent years that Osage Marine Services was ordered to pay millions over a drowning.

In 2018, a jury awarded \$4.5 million to the family of a crew member who died when the towboat he was working on sank in the Mississippi River near East Davis Street and Broadway.