

Righting Wrongs

In a world with no shortage of injustices, Frantz Law Group is fighting the good fight—and winning big.

Four decorated Marine pilots with a decade of combined military service perish in an aircraft collision with an unlit public utility tower. A 15-year-old endures burns over 70% of his body when his welding teacher leaves students unattended. A miner suffers debilitating brain injuries when a crane collapses on him. The largest methane gas leak in U.S. history causes health issues and economic damages for up to 35,000 residents in northern Los Angeles (Porter Ranch)—a leak caused by gas wells that the public utility, SoCalGas® and Sempra® Energy, failed to maintain for years.¹

These preventable tragedies were caused by the negligent misconduct of corporations and

individuals. Founded and helmed by trial lawyer James P. Frantz, Frantz Law Group (FLG) has won jury verdicts and settlements in the billions of dollars for thousands of victims nationwide while leading the way in shaping national public safety policy and regulation.



“Everyone makes mistakes,” Frantz says. “But it’s inexcusable for individuals and corporations to consciously disregard safety for profit. That’s when we go after them.”

A Warning Heeded

Frantz has been calling out the bad guys for as long as he can remember. Decades ago, he represented brokers whose careers and lives were shattered by the irresponsible actions of a prominent financial securities firm. The almost quarter-billion-dollar jury verdict was the largest in San Diego history at the time, and it inspired Frantz to keep fighting on behalf of innocent victims.²

Since forming FLG in the late 1970s, Frantz has litigated some of the most notable cases in the country. The firm currently represents over 6,000 wildfire victims whose lives were upended by the negligence of public utility companies. Recently, FLG participated in negotiating a \$13.5 billion settlement against Pacific Gas and Electric Company for its role in causing the 2017 and 2018 Northern California wildfires that devastated the region.³ This historic payout has assisted communities recover and rebuild and compensated families that lost loved ones. It also serves as a warning to other utility companies that such reckless misconduct will not go unpunished.

Frantz believes that significant settlements and jury verdicts like these have the power to force long-term corporate and individual changes in safety.

For example, he cites another notable California public utility (San Diego Gas & Electric® Company) that undergrounded miles of power lines and set up a large network of weather stations—efforts that have helped detect high winds, low humidity, and high temperatures, thus diminishing the risk of wildfires. “This utility’s safety program is now considered the gold standard in utility safety measures,”



Frantz says. “That, plus new legislation that incentivizes utility safety while aiding victims of wildfires, tells me that litigation is working in sending the right message.”

Recently, the firm set its sights on the JUUL electronic cigarette company and codefendants whose sleek advertising campaigns have lured millions of minors into nicotine vaping, an addictive habit that can lead to permanent cognitive impairment, lung disease, and other negative medical repercussions. “I get angry when I think of the kids who unknowingly become addicted to nicotine e-cigarettes,” Frantz says. Moreover, the school districts are incurring tremendous costs to fight the vaping epidemic. FLG is prosecuting multibillion-dollar litigation on behalf of its clients that consist of over 600 school districts and charter schools nationwide—comprising more than 25,000 schools and approximately 1 million students across 32 states.

FLG is also waging a battle on behalf of its school district clients from around the country that are struggling

to cope with the financial fallout from the opioid epidemic. FLG seeks to hold the opioid manufacturers and distributors accountable for the crisis that has ravaged school districts, students, and families.

Justice for the Innocent

Fighting for the innocent victim is FLG’s guiding light. Frantz recalls the case of four Marine pilots who lost their lives when their helicopter collided with unlit public utility equipment during a military exercise. “These were four decorated Marine Corps officers—stellar individuals all under the age of 30 who risked their lives for their country in Afghanistan and Iraq,” he says.

For years prior to the crash, the Marine Corps had lodged complaints directly with the public utility about the dangerous, unlit utility towers located throughout Camp Pendleton aircraft training airspace. These complaints were ignored, and, inexplicably, the public utility claimed the pilots were at fault for causing the crash. “FLG litigated the case against the utility on behalf of the Marines’ families. After a four-week trial, we obtained a \$55 million jury verdict that included \$40 million in punitive damages because of the utility’s conscious disregard of safety that resulted in the horrific deaths of these four young Marine officers,” Frantz says. “Most importantly, we vindicated the victims and their families, and we helped provide some closure.”²

Winning high-stakes cases requires not only compassion but the will to fight and win at all costs—qualities that FLG has in abundance. Its award-winning and dedicated trial team of 16 lawyers and 30 staff in 12 California offices work tirelessly to positively impact thousands of lives.

To prepare for trials, the firm enlists support from top experts countrywide and conducts exhaustive discovery in complex cases. It also leads mock jury trials in which the FLG team presents evidence from the plaintiff and defense. “Losing is not an option for us,” Frantz says. “We are committed to doing what it takes to win.”

¹ FLG represented 8,202 clients (of the total 35,000) and assisted in negotiating the settlement of \$1.8 billion against SoCalGas®/Sempra® Energy. The results described in this article do not constitute a guarantee, warranty, or prediction regarding the outcome of any future legal matter. These results were dependent on the specific facts of the cases, and results will differ if based on different facts.

² Reduced, appealed, and settled for a confidential amount.

³ This is the global amount for all plaintiffs—for clients of Frantz Law Group and those of other firms.

James P. Frantz, Esq. has approved the contents of this article.



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