

WARNING:

What is in your Social Media profile, webpage, or blog site could damage your personal injury claim and cost you money.

Perhaps you have read about employers and/or potential employers using social media websites such as Facebook as a component of background and reference checks. Well, they are not the only ones who may use social media and other types of internet websites to learn about your life. Insurance companies are catching on to the fact that these sites are full of valuable personal information.

Think Your Social Media Profile is unrelated to your accident claim? Think again.

For professional “fact-gatherers” such as insurance adjusters, claims handlers/adjusters, insurance defense attorneys and private investigators, the vast wealth of information that people freely volunteer on personal web pages, blogs and social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter and others can be a veritable goldmine. The same is true of publicly accessible photo sharing sites and video sites such as YouTube, Flickr and more.

An investigator assigned to conduct surveillance of an accident victim will also conduct internet “surveillance”.

Particularly in the context of a personal injury claim, the information contained in these web pages, blog sites or social networking profiles may be highly relevant to matters at issue in litigation.

Insurance companies can look at this public information to:

- Confirm or disprove the severity of a person’s injuries;
- Confirm or disprove ability to resume normal activities and sports;
- Confirm or disprove ability to work;
- Confirm or disprove ability to interact normally with family members, etc.

The information in blogs, video and photo sharing sites, and social networking profiles can make or break a case.

If you have been injured in an accident and are seeking compensation from the responsible party you must be mindful of how others may perceive even the most innocent and seemingly irrelevant information on your pages/profiles. Insurance companies are experts at taking a few of these little bits of information and twisting them to make it seem as though you are/were not injured, etc.

The Dodson Law Firm asks our injured clients not to make their lives an online open book until the conclusion of their case. Injured victims should pay close attention to what is included on these sites. This includes not only their own profiles, but also information about them which may appear on friends and family members’ profiles as well (tagged photos).