

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**SAFETY INSPECTOR SUED FOR DOING HIS JOB**

A Civil Law suit has been filed in U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, against nationally known Safety Consultant Ken Martin of KRM Consulting in Richmond, Virginia. The lawsuit filed by Ronald Scott Weber and World Wide Entertainment Group (WWEG), an amusement ride operator doing business on the east coast from Florida to Virginia, with addresses in Ruskin, Florida and Virginia.

The lawsuit stems from several alleged incidents, all occurring in Virginia. In one particular incident referenced in the lawsuit, Martin failed to pass a Grover Watkins Swinger ride at a location in Richmond, Virginia. The Swinger ride, which has chairs, suspended on chains had over one hundred items that needed repair. Each seat has four forged eyebolts that connect the chains to the seats. Most of these eyebolts were of the wrong type and grade. In addition they were secured improperly. The ride did not have seat belts as required by the Manufacturer, the electrical wiring to the lights was worn and bare wires were exposed. Also no documentation of a Safety Alert and Inspection Requirement issued by the Consumer Product Safety had been complied with.

The Baltimore Law Firm of Miles and Stockbridge represents Weber and WWEG. The attorneys working on the case are R. Wayne Pierce and Jeffrey S. Poretz. Pierce is known throughout the close-knit amusement ride industry as a “go to” for

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amusement ride defense. The self-regulated amusement ride industry has a network of defense attorneys located throughout the United States who jump into action whenever an injury occurs on an amusement ride, putting their unique spin (which is always to blame the rider) on the situation. Pierce has also deposed Martin at least once and assisted in several other depositions. In the case where Pierce deposed Martin, Pierce represented Six Flags and lost the case. Martin has testified in Court and has been declared an expert in amusement ride safety issues. Martin does not have legal representation at this time.

The lawsuit also criticizes the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Housing and Community Development, Virginia Amusement Device Regulations program, which was one of the first and only handful of States, to train, test and certify amusement ride inspectors. Further the lawsuit contains slanderous and libelous statement about Martin, KRM Consulting and Martin's mission of being an advocate and sometimes, outspoken critic of amusement ride safety.

Furthermore the lawsuit fails to mention the Gravitron incident in Fairfax County, Virginia where WWEG's Gravitron was stuck in the run position for several minutes, thus trapping riders until someone shut the power to the ride. At the same event, another ride came off its sweep and crashed to the ground. Martin was scheduled by WWEG to inspect rides at this location. At the least minute, Martin was called away on a family emergency and WWEG arranged for another inspector. Fairfax County and the Consumer Product Safety Commission conducted an investigation. The results are unknown.

This action against Martin further demonstrates how close knit the amusement ride industry really is. They will do whatever it takes to stay in business and at the same time compromise the riding public's safety. This year alone, an amusement ride owner,

electrician and ride inspector has been sentenced to jail time for the death of an eight-

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year-old boy in Ohio. An amusement owner/operator in Tennessee has been charged in the death of a rider at a Pigeon Forge amusement park. A rider was killed while boarding a ride in Orlando and a ride blew apart at a Miami carnival and a ride came apart at a Massachusetts carnival. Preliminary reports on all of these incidents indicate owner/operator negligence. It should be pointed out these are only the incident that have made headlines. Since there are not any national in-depth reporting requirements, we may never know the true history and record of the industry. The few regulations that are in place usually adopt the Industry's self-written standards.

The lawsuit also criticizes Martin and his comments to the media regarding amusement ride incidents, injuries and deaths. To all trusting people of America, moms, dads, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters, is this anyway to treated someone who stands up for your safety? Why is the Industry seeking to silence the messenger, rather than change the message?

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Editor's Note: Mr. Martin has been has inspecting amusement rides in Virginia since 1993. The Commonwealth of Virginia's, Department of Housing & Community Development has certified him as a Amusement Device Inspector. For fifteen year previous to his certification as an Inspector, he served as a Team Member, Team Leader and First Aid Station Co-Manager of First Aid Stations provided by the American Red Cross throughout the Greater Richmond area, including the Virginia State Fair. He is currently self employed as a Safety Consultant.