

Larry Ghilzai says he quit his job after life became unbearable because of rumor that he had AIDS

AIDS rumor ruined his life, ex-electronics worker says

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isolated spot in the plant that was unsafe. As a result of that, he contends, his hair began falling out.
Ghilzai, a native of Afghanistan

who now is unemployed and living in Fremont, quit his job as a chemical technician at SEEQ on June 23 "after suffering considerable embarrassment and emotional

anguish," according to the lawsuit.

"My life has become pointless and sad," Ghilzai said through his lawyer Thursday. "There's no way to mend my reputation or my family's reputation in the Afghani community."

Dennis Lyons, vice president of personnel for SEEQ, said neither he nor other company officials could comment on the suit because "the matter is in litigation."

As a result of his treatment at SEEQ, Ghilzai charges in the lawsuit, he has been forced to seek medical and psychiatric treatment for physical and emotional distress, including sleeplessness, depression, weight loss and suicidal tendencies.

"Before this happened, I had read a lot about the AIDS hysteria and how gays were being treated," he said Thursday. "It felt like a nightmare coming true."

According to the suit, Lonny Wright, a supervisor, and Kevin Curnes, another SEEQ employee, said in front of witnesses June 17 that Ghilzai was suffering from Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. The two are among the co-defendants named in the suit.

The suit says that the two had no reason to say that about Ghilzai and that they did nothing to correct their false statements later.

A few days after the alleged statement, Ghilzai said, he came to work and found on the company's premises a flier linking him with AIDS. The flier said: "LARRY GHILZAI — STOP SPREADING AIDS — QUIT NOW."

Neither Ghilzai nor his lawyer knows who was responsible for the flier.

Ghilzai said he immediately wrote a letter to Lyons, vice president of personnel, informing him of the statements being made about him having AIDS and their effect on his co-workers and on his work environment.

The suit says Lyons took no action to check on the allegations about Ghilzai.

AIDS has claimed more than 900 victims in the United States. A disorder that destroys the body's ability to fight infection, the disease has been discovered in male homosexuals, intravenous drug users, Haitians and hemophiliacs. It is usually fatal.

Devastating rumor AIDS tale wrecked career, worker charges in lawsuit

By Linda Goldston
Staff Writer

An electronics worker is seeking \$30 million in damages from SEEQ Inc. of San Jose for harassment about his homosexuality and for isolating him from other employees because of rumors that he had AIDS.

Waheed "Larry" Ghilzai, who said he does not have AIDS, contends in a lawsuit filed in Santa Clara County Superior Court in July that company officials did nothing to stop an AIDS slander campaign against him. He also seeks damages because of derogatory comments made during the past year about his homosexuality by company officials, including his supervisor.

The complaint charges that company officials began moving other employees away from Ghilzai's work station after the AIDS rumors started in early June, said his attorney, Elizabeth L. Shivell of San Jose.

"The AIDS rumor was the reason people were told they were being moved" away from Ghilzai, Shivell said Thursday.

In addition, Ghilzai claims that he was moved to an

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