

## **SKIP JONES' Injured Worker Horror Story**

“I used to be a winemaker, hiker and swimmer; now I can’t even sit long enough to eat a meal. I’ve waited years for my needed shoulder and back surgeries. My doctor recommended surgery, which has been denied for years by nurses in New Hampshire.”



**About Me:** My name is Ralph Jones - I go by “Skip.” I’m 55 years old and I live in Fairfield, between Sacramento and San Francisco.

**My Family:** My wife, Sally, and I have been married since 1995. Sally is a nurse.

**My Job and What Happened:** I worked for a winery in the Napa Valley. I was the Tasting Room Manager. I ran the public area where customers could taste and buy wines and t-shirts or have private catered parties. On March 21, 2002, the winery drains next to the tasting room had been flushed. Water, mixed with oils, had seeped up through the soil outside the tasting room, and came under the door onto the floor. While carrying a load of clean glasses, I slipped and fell, tearing my rotator cuff, my right deltoid muscle, and injuring my lower back. I tried to keep working, but the pain was unbearable. The winery manager sent me to the emergency room, and later to the company’s doctor. The company’s doctor provided little care, and seemed to care very little. He sent me to physical therapy, which worsened my injury. MRIs and X-rays later showed I need surgery.

**What this has meant to my life:** I used to make wine, ice skate, swim, and operate backhoes and other landscaping equipment. Now, I can’t even sit still long enough to eat a meal because of the pain. I’ve spent years fighting with the insurance company for authorization for surgery -- and just to get them to admit I needed surgery. I’ve lost my income and my car. I’ve got a \$20,000 bill for emergency room care to manage living with the pain while fighting for medical care.

## **How the Governor's Workers' Comp Law Affects Me**

**How Workers' Comp was supposed to help me:** The governor promised immediate medical care, but the moment he signed his law my care evaporated. The insurance company has repeatedly denied care, surgery and needed equipment. I’ve been sleeping on the floor for 3 years because the insurance company won’t approve a mattress and box springs I can sleep on. Many of these refusals for care recommended by my doctor came from Utilization Review nurses in New Hampshire!

**[www.VotersInjuredatWork.org](http://www.VotersInjuredatWork.org)**

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