On March 25, 2013, Judge Kathleen O'Malley issued an order recommending that the MDL Panel dissolve the welding fume MDL proceeding, which had been pending since 2003. Judge O'Malley's two-page order marked the official end of the welding fume litigation, but it had fizzled long before. Once billed by plaintiffs' counsel as the next asbestos, the welding fume litigation did not live up to that promise as the welding defendants uncovered repeated instances of fraud and won nearly every trial and/or appeal.

Below are some key facts about the litigation:

- **Over the life of the litigation, defendants prevailed in 25 of 30 cases that reached trial and won reversals of three of the five plaintiffs' verdicts.**
    - Plaintiffs in the welding fume litigation had few successes, winning only five of the 20,000 cases they filed over the course of a decade.
    - Three of the five plaintiff's verdicts were reversed on appeal.
- **Several cases were dismissed based on revelations of fraud.**
    - One plaintiff who claimed full disability was caught on videotape driving a tractor and carrying groceries.
    - Another plaintiff continued racing high-speed powerboats after claiming to be disabled.
- **As a result of the fraud revelations, the MDL judge demanded that plaintiffs' counsel investigate and certify cases before designating them for trial, a requirement that led to mass dismissals.**
    - Over the course of several years, plaintiffs voluntarily dismissed thousands of claims rather than certify them as trial-worthy. Plaintiffs even dismissed more than two-thirds of the MDL cases they had actually certified.
    - In total, all but 100 of the 12,000 claims once pending in the MDL proceeding were voluntarily dismissed by plaintiffs prior to January 2012. Those 100 claims have since been dismissed.
- **The most reliable and comprehensive epidemiological studies continue to show no association between welding and neurological disorders.**

- In September 2012, Neurology published a review and meta-analysis that examined the potential association between welding or manganese exposure and Parkinson's disease. The authors concluded that welding and manganese exposure are not associated with an increased risk of Parkinson's disease. They noted that their finding "is consistent with conclusions reached in previously published reviews."[1]

- In September 2009, the Archives of Neurology published results from a Multicenter Case-Control Study, which compared lifelong occupational and job-task histories for participants who worked in a variety of occupations that had been reported elsewhere to be associated with parkinsonism, including farming, education, health care and welding. Findings from 519 cases and 511 controls showed that those who worked in farming, education, healthcare and welding did not have a greater risk of parkinsonism or Parkinson's disease.[2]

- In May 2009, the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene published a nationwide mortality study of men in the United States assessing whether there is a relationship between welding and mortality from Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease or other neurodegenerative diseases. Information was abstracted from death certificates for states that collected data on occupation. The author concluded that the evidence does not support an association between welding occupations and death from Parkinson's disease or other neurodegenerative diseases. There was also no evidence that welders are at increased odds of dying from Parkinson's disease at a younger age.[3]

---

[1] Mortimer, J., et al., *Associations of Welding and Manganese Exposure with Parkinson's Disease.* Neurology, 2012; 79: 1174-1180.

[2] Tanner, C., et al., *Occupation and Risk of Parkinsonism: A Multicenter Case-Control Study*. Arch Neurol. 2009;66(9):1106-1113.

[3] Stampfer, M., et al., *Welding Occupations and Mortality from Parkinson's Disease and Other Neurodegenerative Diseases Among United States Men. 1985-1999.* Occup. Envtl. Med., May 30, 2009.