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## E-cigarette exploded in Florida man's mouth, lawsuit contends



A Naples man is suing after his electronic cigarette exploded in his mouth, burning his face, throat and lungs in an accident that left him briefly in a coma.

Evan Spahlinger this week filed a lawsuit in Miami-Dade targeting the companies that manufactured and sold him the e-cigarette, which has been billed as a safer alternative to traditional smoking.

With millions of users across the country, e-cigarettes deliver vaporized nicotine through a heated liquid solution. But questions about the health and fire risks of the products have mounted, with the U.S. Department of Transportation recently banning e-cigarettes from checked bags on airplanes.

“This malfunction left Evan permanently injured and caused him unimaginable mental anguish,” said his lawyer, John J. Uustal, of Fort Lauderdale.

The lawsuit was filed in Miami-Dade because the companies do extensive business here.

According to the lawsuit, Spahlinger bought the “Rig Mod V.2” electronic cigarette from the Vaping Station in Naples back in July. The cigarette was manufactured by San Diego-based VapeAMP. The companies could not immediately be reached for comment.

Three months later, the e-cigarette exploded in “into flames in his face, causing him to inhale flames, smoke, and scorching hot air,” according to the lawsuit. He suffered “severe injuries” and had to be rushed to the burn unit at Kendall Regional Medical Center.

“On the way, Evan’s esophagus and lungs began to swell from his internal burns,” according to the lawsuit.

He was placed in a medically-induced coma, and even now his his injuries are permanent and require constant care, his lawyers said in a press release. Spahlinger continues to require extensive follow-up care attendant to his permanent injuries.

Representatives for Vaping Station and VapeAMP could not immediately be reached for comment.