

Inadequate Inspection Policies Result in **\$1.725 Million** Verdict Against Dollar General

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## Inadequate Inspection Policies Result in **\$1.725 Million** Verdict Against Dollar General

Recently, a Mobile County, Alabama jury returned a \$1,725,000 verdict against Dollar General, finding that its inadequate inspection policies led to a customer's injuries.



On July 9, 2012, Deborah Revette, a customer at Dollar General Store No. 7853 in Mobile County, slipped and fell in clear, liquid laundry detergent that

was on the floor in the chemical aisle. She suffered severe leg and shoulder fractures that resulted in eight surgeries, 395 doctor visits, and over \$470,000 in medical bills. She was permanently disabled as a result of the fall.

The evidence showed that while Dollar General stores are open for 14 hours each day, corporate policy only requires employees to devote 10 minutes to safety inspections. Those safety inspections are informal, undocumented, and are not verified by a supervisor. Testimony comparing the method by which and how often other retailers in and around Mobile County conduct safety inspections made clear that Dollar General's informal policy of "visual safety checks" for 10 minutes each day was both unsafe and unacceptable.

"The evidence proved that Dollar General's safety policies are inadequate and outdated. Our hope is that the jury's verdict will motivate the company to implement changes that will make its stores safe for all customers. Deborah's injury was entirely preventable," said Robert L. Mitchell, who tried the case with Lucy E. Tufts, both partners with the law firm of Cunningham Bounds, LLC.

Founded in 1958, Cunningham Bounds has been representing plaintiffs for over 55 years. We have a long and successful history of helping people who have been injured or harmed by the wrongdoing of others. Our firm was born out of the desire to create change and improve lives. We thoroughly prepare each case. We leave no stone unturned, no evidence untouched, and no detail unexamined. This precision and focus ensures that we present each client's very best case to the jury. Today, our goal remains as it was in 1958 - to achieve the best possible result for each client by holding people and companies accountable for their wrongdoing.

# Accolades



**Robert Cunningham and Joseph Brown** were named as two of Benchmark Litigation's 2017 "Top 100 Trial Lawyers in America." Benchmark's Top 100 list names the most prominent lawyers from all regions of the United States who are known for their expertise with bench and jury trials. The Top 100 are considered an elite group, having outstanding peer and client reviews as well as proven achievements.



**Greg Breedlove** was invited by the American College of Trial Lawyers to present at the Jere White Trial Advocacy Institute. He presented on the topic "Plaintiff's Opening Statement – Suggestions for Success." The seminar was held in Birmingham, Alabama with more than 300 attending.



**Lucy Tufts** was one of only 23 lawyers in the United States recognized as a "2016 Winning Litigator" by the National Law Journal. The report noted that lawyers who made the list "all have something in common – they score big wins in court."



**Robert Mitchell** was recently board certified in Civil Trial Law by the National Board of Trial Advocacy. Board certification is the highest, most stringent, and most reliable honor an attorney can achieve. Approximately three percent of American lawyers have earned this distinction.



**Brian Duncan** was recently named an Associate Fellow by the Litigation Counsel of America (LCA). LCA is the trial lawyer honorary society, composed of less than one-half of one percent of American Lawyers.

**LEGALUPDATE**  
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## PARTNERS

ROBERT T. CUNNINGHAM

JOSEPH M. BROWN, JR. \*

GREGORY B. BREEDLOVE \*

DAVID G. WIRTES, JR. \*\*

TOBY D. BROWN \*

GEORGE W. FINKBOHNER, III \*

STEPHEN C. OLEN

STEVEN L. NICHOLAS

DAVID S. CAIN, JR. \*

WILLIAM E. BONNER

ROBERT L. MITCHELL \*

J. BRIAN DUNCAN, JR.

LUCY E. TUFTS

\*CERTIFIED AS A CIVIL TRIAL SPECIALIST  
BY THE NATIONAL BOARD  
OF TRIAL ADVOCACY

\*\*CERTIFIED AS AN APPELLATE SPECIALIST  
BY THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE  
OF APPELLATE PRACTICE

**Cunningham Bounds** was named one of Alabama's Leading Litigation Firms by Benchmark Litigation in its 2017 Directory. The firm received Benchmark's top ranking of "Highly Recommended – Local Litigation Firms," and was one of only 10 law firms in Alabama to receive this honor.

In addition to Cunningham Bounds' firm ranking, seven of its attorneys were named "Local Litigation Stars" in this year's guide: **Greg Breedlove, Joseph "Buddy" Brown, Toby Brown, David Cain, Robert Cunningham, George "Skip" Finkbohner, and Steve Olen.** This edition of Benchmark Litigation also noted **Robert Mitchell** on its "Future Stars" list.

# Above & Beyond: The Standard at Cunningham Bounds



Pictured are long-time staffers of Cunningham Bounds who have gone above and beyond for many years to take care of our clients: (seated, left to right) Amanda Cotton, 22 years; Cheryl Hollon, 30 years; Karen Hyde, 38 years; Judy Anderson, 20 years; (standing, left to right) Fay Smith, 30 years; Starr Golden, 23 years; Chris Mayhall, 20 years; and Sharon Graham, 24 years.

Every day, the law firm of Cunningham Bounds strives to set the standard for achieving courtroom results for our clients, taking care of our employees, and making a difference in our community. One of the essential elements of our success is a culture in which everyone performs at the highest level, focuses on what is best for clients, and works together.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employees remain with their employers for an average of 4.2 years. Surveys consistently suggest that a healthy work environment, growth, and meaningful work are essential for employee retention. Studies show that employee satisfaction and longevity are essential for client satisfaction.

Our employees average 11 years of service to the firm – nearly three times longer than the national average. Thirty-three of our staff members have worked with us for more than five years, 11 for more than 20 years, and three for more than 30 years.

“Working here gives me a feeling that I am a part of something special. We all care for our clients and their well-being. The attorneys have high expectations of everyone, but only after demanding the same of themselves,” said Fay Smith, a Cunningham Bounds employee for 30 years.

“I’ve stayed as long as I have because I like the work and the people are like family. The firm not only cares about clients, but also cares about employees,” explained Karen Hyde, a Cunningham Bounds employee for 38 years.

Our team of attorneys and staff are skilled in their craft, loyal to their clients, and are committed to fighting for justice each and every day. This dedication to doing what’s right ensures that everyone who is part of the Cunningham Bounds team goes above and beyond to help those in need.



Fay Smith, Karen Hyde and Cheryl Hollon are part of a unique group at Cunningham Bounds. Each of these women have served our clients for more than 30 years.

1601 DAUPHIN STREET | MOBILE, ALABAMA 36604  
 T (251) 471 6191 | TF (800) 472 6191 | F (251) 479 1031  
 MAILING ADDRESS POST OFFICE BOX 66705 | MOBILE, ALABAMA 36660  
 CUNNINGHAMBOUNDS.COM

The following language is required by Alabama Rules of Professional Conduct:  
 "No representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater  
 than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers."

## In Our **Community**



Cunningham Bounds  
 & American Cancer  
 Society **Make Strides  
 Against Cancer**

In October, the Cunningham Bounds team participated in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk through downtown Mobile. More than 20,000 people in our community participated, and more than \$400,000 was raised to help fund the Cancer Society's programs and research.



Mobile's Women Lawyers  
 & Cunningham Bounds  
**Raise Funds for  
 Rape Crisis Center**

Cunningham Bounds was the Signature Sponsor of the Mobile Bar Association Women Lawyers' networking event for professional women. Held in October, the event featured Mobile native Lynn Mackie as the keynote speaker. All proceeds from the event were donated to the Lifelines Counseling Services Rape Crisis Center.



**Save the Date!**  
 Join Us in Supporting  
 the **Child  
 Advocacy Center**

Cunningham Bounds will serve as the Presenting Sponsor of the 2017 Cajun Cook-Off, benefitting the Child Advocacy Center. Please save the date of March 18th and plan to join us downtown for great food and music.