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IN BRIEF / MODESTO

Accord Reached in Suit Over Tire Dump Fire

From Times Wire Reports

Area residents who filed a class-action lawsuit after a massive Stanislaus County tire dump caught on fire and burned for more than a month in 1999 will receive \$9 million under a settlement reached with the tire company operators.

Scott Cole, the lead attorney representing more than 10,000 Westley residents, said the settlement, which became final Monday, could help their case against the remaining defendants. The Westley fire began when lightning struck tires at CMS Generation Co., one of several defendants in the class-action suit. It touched off a blaze that belched toxic smoke, contaminated the land and threatened groundwater supplies in a canyon near Interstate 5.

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