

Steven W. Jennings  
Crowley, Haughey, Hanson,  
Toole & Dietrich P.L.L.P.  
P. O. Box 2529  
Billings, MT 59103-2529  
(406) 252-3441  
Attorneys for Birmingham Fire Insurance Company

**FILED**

**JUN - 6 2005**

OFFICE OF  
WORKERS' COMPENSATION JUDGE  
HELENA, MONTANA

IN THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION COURT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

DALE REESOR,	)	
	)	
Petitioner,	)	WCC No. 2002-0676
	)	
vs.	)	
	)	
MONTANA STATE FUND,	)	RESPONSE TO PETITIONER'S
	)	CLAIM FOR COMMON FUND
	)	ATTORNEYS FEES
Respondent/Insurer.	)	

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Comes now Respondent, Birmingham Fire Insurance Company, by and through counsel of record, and pursuant to this Court's *Summons and Notice of Attorney Fee Lien* of April 22, 2005, answers Petitioner's claim that a common fund exists in the above entitled action.

**ANSWER**

1. A common fund does not exist in this case because the purported non-participating beneficiaries of the decisions in this case and in *Reesor v. Montana State Fund*, 2004 MT 370, 103 P.3d 1019, 325 Mont. 1, are not ascertainable.
2. A common fund does not exist in this case because the decisions in this case and in *Reesor v. Montana State Fund*, 2004 MT 370, 103 P.3d 1019, 325 Mont. 1, are no more than favorable precedent to future litigants seeking permanent partial disability benefits under Montana's Workers' Compensation Act.
3. A common fund does not exist in this case because the process of identifying unascertainable beneficiaries places an impermissible and undue burden on insurance companies who wrote workers' compensation policies in Montana.

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419

4. A common fund does not exist in this case because the participating litigant, Dale Reesor, did not create, preserve or increase an identifiable monetary fund or benefit in which all non-participating beneficiaries maintain an interest.
5. In the event that a common fund is found to exist in this case, the identified beneficiaries are liable for payment of the attorneys' fees and not this answering respondent.

WHEREFORE, Birmingham Fire Insurance Company respectfully requests this court to issue an order denying the existence of a common fund in this case.

Dated this 3rd day of June, 2005.

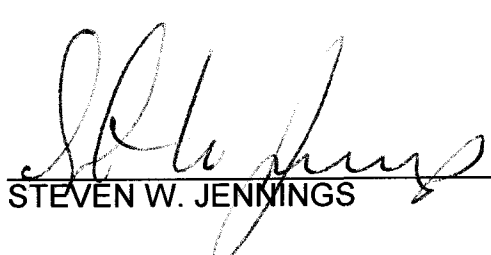
CROWLEY, HAUGHEY, HANSON,  
TOOLE & DIETRICH P.L.L.P.  
Attorneys for Birmingham Fire Insurance  
Company

By:   
STEVEN W. JENNINGS

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I, STEVEN W. JENNINGS, one of the attorneys for the law firm of Crowley, Haughey, Hanson, Toole & Dietrich P.L.L.P., hereby certify that on the 3rd day of June, 2005, I mailed a true and correct copy of the foregoing document, (postage prepaid, to the following:

Mr. Thomas J. Murphy  
Murphy Law Firm  
PO Box 3226  
Great Falls, MT 59403-3226

  
STEVEN W. JENNINGS