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## Roof, Gutter Cleaners Get OK For \$1.7M Wage Settlement

By **Adam Lidgett**

Law360 (February 12, 2018, 4:14 PM EST) -- A Washington state judge on Friday gave his final approval to a \$1.7 million deal to end a class action accusing a company that performs window and gutter cleaning of not paying technicians for certain work they did off the clock.

King County Superior Court Judge John. P. Erlick on Friday granted final approval to the settlement of claims against Quick & Clear Inc., which does business as AA Window and Gutter Cleaning, and its owner Brett VandenBrink. The judge, who said the court preliminarily approved the deal in December, wrote that no members of the class objected to the deal.

About 102 people will get payouts from the \$1.7 million deal, according to Scott Blankenship of The Blankenship Law Firm PS, an attorney for the plaintiffs.

"After the court entered judgment on behalf of the class, the only issue remaining for trial was determining the amount of wages owed and the penalty," Blankenship said in a statement. "When employers fail to pay employees the wages due to them by law, there needs to be substantial consequences."

The lawsuit, filed in December 2016, alleged that the company required certain workers to do work off the clock and that that work was not paid. Among the allegations, the workers contended they were required to start work at their homes, where they received emails about their daily tasks.

The class members had to drive a company vehicle from home to the job site at the start of the day and from their last site back to their home at the end of the day without being compensated for it, the complaint said.

Additionally, the complaint said, the workers had to wash their own towels without being paid for it.

"I am grateful to live in a place where there is access to justice, and I feel great that we were not only able to recover the wages lawfully owed, but that the lawsuit actually changed how we got paid going forward," class representative Jeff Main said in a statement.

Patricia K. Buchanan of Patterson Buchanan Fobes & Leitch Inc. PS, an attorney for the defendants, told Law360 on Monday that VandenBrink paid more than was fair, didn't fight the lawsuit and funded the settlement amount out of his own pocket.

"Due to legal paperwork requirements, he was not paying his people correctly according to the paperwork," she said. "Were his employees paid more than fairly? Yes. These were window washers that were being paid on average \$90,000 a year on a commission basis."

The plaintiffs are represented by Scott Blankenship, Rick Goldsworthy and Jordan Taren of the Blankenship Law Firm PS.

The company is represented by Patricia K. Buchanan and Adam G. Cuff of Patterson Buchanan Fobes & Leitch Inc. PS.

The case is Jeffrey Main et al. v. Quick & Clear Inc. d/b/a AA Window and Gutter Cleaning et al., case number 16-2-29685-8, in the Superior Court of the State of Washington in and for King County.

--Editing by Stephen Berg.

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