

Bomb blast sparks suit against pal

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LAWRENCE — The family of Michael Grubmiller, 16, who suffered severe injuries from a pipe bomb explosion last month, has filed a civil suit against a classmate, who allegedly gave him the bomb, and against the classmate's parents.

The Lawrence High School classmate, John Shevack, 17, and his father, Michael, 47, already face criminal charges.

On the night of Jan. 29, Grubmiller was handling a two-inch pipe bomb in his basement when it exploded, blowing off his right hand and three fingers of his left hand. He also suffered injuries to his legs and his groin area.

On Feb. 8, Michael Shevack of South Brunswick was charged with supplying the gunpowder to his son, John, who allegedly manufactured the bomb that injured Grubmiller.

Shevack and his son each face criminal charges of possession of explosives for unlawful purposes, and aiding and abetting, which

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carry a possible prison term of three to five years, according to Mercer County Assistant Prosecutor Maryann Bielamowicz.

Yesterday, Albert M. Stark and Beth G. Baldinger, both of the Stark & Stark law firm, filed a civil complaint on behalf of the Grubmillers against Michael Shevack, John Shevack, and his mother, Elaine Shevack.

They sued for general and punitive damages. Baldinger would not disclose how much money they would demand. She said, "The sum will compensate for the grievous injury, as well as a punitive amount to set an example that this type of conduct will not and cannot be condoned."

"No amount of money will ever compensate my client, Michael Grubmiller, and his family for the pain and anguish that they have gone through and will continue to go through for the rest of their lives," Baldinger said.

The complaint stated that the Grubmillers will have to spend a large amount of money on medical

treatment and that Michael Grubmiller will lose future income because of handicaps resulting from the injury.

Furthermore, the complaint said he "permanently lost his ability to enjoy the quality of life he once had."

The six counts listed in the complaint include the charge that the Shevacks acted unlawfully and endangered the safety of others by negligence in providing the explosives.

Another count stated the parents should have known their son was manufacturing explosives and they failed to control him.

In another count, the complaint said that Carl Grubmiller, Michael's father, had suffered "severe mental anguish and emotional distress" when he "observed (his son's) devastating and gruesome injuries."

Kim A. Otis of Princeton, who is representing the son, John Shevack, believes the Grubmillers will have problems with their civil suit because their son "got the bomb with knowledge of what he was getting into."