

Trial Victory

Construction Cost Estimate for Water Damage

The Problem

This project concerned water damage to a unit in a 3-story condominium building. One morning, a second-floor resident, the Plaintiff, heard noises from upstairs that sounded like someone was working on the plumbing system. That evening, the downstairs neighbor, informed the Plaintiff that water was coming through the ceiling and dripping down the chandelier in the lower unit. The Plaintiff then realized water was gushing from her own sink and spreading throughout the kitchen, dining, and living room. The resident in the third-floor unit (the Defendant), directly above the Plaintiff's, had hired a plumber to clear a clog in the pipes. The plumber used a device that forced highly pressurized water through the pipe, which caused the Plaintiff's pipe to burst. After the incident, the Plaintiff hired an "Expert" who estimated the cost of repair for the damages at over \$170,000.

The Solution

PFCS was hired by the Defendant to conduct an on-site investigation of the Plaintiff's unit and deliver our own cost-to-repair estimate for the damages. The Plaintiff's Expert had considerably overestimated the cost of numerous items, including cabinets, flooring, and content storage. We delivered an Inspection Summary report listing and showing photographs of the damage caused by the event, and a corresponding Cost Estimate, totaling approximately \$45,000. The case went to trial, where we presented an Estimate Summary that compared their estimate to ours, item-by-item. Based on our expert testimony, the Plaintiff was awarded \$46,000 for construction-related damages, plus \$14,000 for non-construction-related issues. The total award by the jury of \$60,000 was more than \$100,000 less than the plaintiff's estimate.

