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Court win in eye case

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WHEN Laurence De-Young went to his local tip six years ago, little did he know it would change his life.

“I felt like I had been shot,” he said.

What happened not only shocked Mr De-Young, it subsequently cost Campaspe Shire more than \$34,000.

In November, 2002, Mr De-Young drove to his local waste transfer station at Toolleen.

He had with him household waste, including an old portable television.

“I just put the TV on the edge of the bin and let it tip over ... then all of a sudden I felt this bang,” he said.

“I didn't know what had happened.”

As the television tipped over, the cord at the back flipped up and hit Mr De-Young in his left eye.

“My immediate reaction was to panic - I just didn't know what to do.”

Mr De-Young rushed back home and was taken to Heathcote Hospital then the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital in Melbourne where he spent two days.

His eye, constantly at risk of swelling, still requires regular treatment.

Last year, Mr De-Young sued the shire in a case that ran for five days in the County Court.

The jury concluded that the shire was negligent in its disposal practices and awarded Mr De-Young \$34,200 in damages.

Campaspe Shire appealed against the judgement in the Supreme Court, arguing that it was Mr De-Young's fault.

The appeal was dismissed last month.

Mr De-Young's lawyer, Harry Nowicki, said his firm believed the claim was legitimate.

“The insurance company and their lawyers heavily fought this claim from beginning to end. Laurence has been vindicated by the verdict of the courts.”

Mr De-Young's left eye is permanently dilated and he is regularly in pain when exposed to bright light.

“I hope other people can learn from this, and just be cautious when disposing of rubbish,” he said.

