

# MensNewsDaily

## Must We Litigate Everything?

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### Must We Litigate Everything?

Overlawyered's Walter Olson [blogged](#) about a man who was upset that the Santa Rosa Hilton he stayed at charged him 75 cents for a newspaper he thought was free. Naturally, he filed a federal class-action lawsuit instead of just telling the hotel to take it off his bill, and being watchful about it the next time!

*SF Chron* [article](#) on the case here, by Henry K. Lee:

"He did not request a newspaper and assumed it had been placed there by hotel staff," said the suit, filed Wednesday in U.S. District Court in San Francisco. Harmon didn't realize until later that a 75-cent charge for the paper had been added to his bill.

Harmon accused Hilton of deliberately hiding the newspaper charge by describing the fee in an "extremely small font which is difficult to notice or read" on the sleeve of the room card.

The suit noted that newspaper readership and circulation has drastically declined over the past several decades and that most hotel guests probably aren't reading the paper anyway. The wasted papers are an "offensive waste of precious resources and energy," said the suit, which also said that "deforestation caused by paper production is a matter of concern and worry in this state, country and worldwide."

[Untrue!](#) John Tierney [explained](#) in *The New York Times*:

Yes, a lot of trees have been cut down to make today's newspaper. But even more trees will probably be planted in their place. America's supply of timber has been increasing for decades, and the nation's forests have three times more wood today than in 1920. "We're not running out of wood, so why do we worry so much about recycling paper?" asks Jerry Taylor, the director of natural resource studies at the Cato Institute. "Paper is an agricultural product, made from trees grown specifically for paper production. Acting to conserve trees by recycling paper is like acting to conserve cornstalks by cutting back on corn consumption."

My comment on Overlawyered about going from zero to ginormous lawsuit:

Must we litigate everything? A guy at a liquor store in Long Beach charged me 50 cents without telling me because I used my VISA. I noticed that the bill was high and he then

said it was 50 cents extra because I used a credit card. I told him I knew that was against the credit card company's merchant agreement, and told him to give me my 50 cents back or I'd report him to VISA. He did. I left. No lawsuit. Case closed!