

IVAN PUCHALT

GREENE BROILLET & WHEELER



What was the genesis of the path that has made you a trailblazer?

Ivan Puchalt is one of the preeminent plaintiff lawyers in California for litigating tree fall cases against both private and public entities. Ivan has won several high-profile cases involving consumers who have suffered life-altering injuries due to falling trees and tree branches due to negligent maintenance.

What sort of change has resulted from the concept?

Mr. Puchalt secured a \$2 million settlement with the City of Los Angeles for a woman who suffered severe orthopedic and neurologic injuries after a tree branch crushed the roof above her head in the rear seat of a car. He also secured a confidential settlement from an HOA on behalf of a local TV news reporter who suffered severe and permanent injuries when a eucalyptus tree fell on her while she reported on the aftermath of a severe storm in San Diego. Ivan was also on the plaintiff's trial team that obtained a \$7.6 million verdict against the City of San Diego for a man paralyzed by a fallen palm tree. Many municipalities which have curtailed inspections of public trees due to budget cuts are now devoting more resources to identifying and remediating dangerous trees as a result of these lawsuits.

What bearing will this have on the future?

Some cities have reported a more than 30% increase in tree failures over the past decades due to drought, an aging urban tree population, and deferred maintenance by public entities due to budget cuts. By holding municipalities accountable, these cases raise awareness and prompt public and private entities to change tree maintenance practices and increase inspections of potentially dangerous trees.