

**IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF IOWA**

No. 8-1040 / 08-0585  
Filed February 4, 2009

**STEVEN JOHN GOODMAN,**  
Petitioner-Appellant,

**vs.**

**SNAP-ON TOOLS CORPORATION,**  
Respondent-Appellee.

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Appeal from the Iowa District Court for Kossuth County, David A. Lester,  
Judge.

Steven Goodman appeals from the district court's judgment affirming the workers' compensation commissioner's decision denying additional benefits to a former employee in a review-reopening proceeding. **AFFIRMED.**

Mark S. Soldat of Soldat & Parrish-Sams, P.L.C., West Des Moines, for  
appellant.

Joseph M. Barron of Peddicord, Wharton, Spencer, Hook, Barron &  
Wegman, LLP, Des Moines, for appellee.

Considered by Vogel, P.J., and Mahan and Miller, JJ.

**PER CURIAM**

Steven Goodman appeals from the district court's April 4, 2008 judgment affirming the workers' compensation commissioner's decision denying additional benefits to a former employee in a review-reopening proceeding. A brief recitation of background facts is necessary.

On February 27, 1999, Goodman suffered a work-related one-and-one-half inch long, rather superficial ("only into the subcutaneous fatty tissue"), laceration on the palm of his right hand while employed at Snap-On Tools Corporation. Goodman subsequently filed an original notice and petition with the Iowa workers' compensation commissioner.

In an April 29, 2002 arbitration decision, which became the final agency action when the deputy commissioner who presided at the arbitration hearing became commissioner, the agency identified the "controlling issue" as being "whether the injury of February 27, 1999, was a proximate cause of any of [Goodman's] subsequently diagnosed conditions." By agreement of the parties and the agency the question of any permanent partial disability was bifurcated for later determination.

Briefly summarized, the agency determined that conditions of Goodman's right arm (carpal tunnel, cubital tunnel, and epicondylitis) were causally connected to the laceration injury, but that other conditions, in his shoulder, neck and cervical spine, and any chronic pain or reflex sympathetic types of conditions, were not causally connected to the laceration. Otherwise stated, the agency determined that the laceration had caused a "scheduled member" injury

rather than “unscheduled” or “body as a whole” injury. See generally, *Dowell v. Wagler*, 509 N.W.2d 134, 136-37 (Iowa Ct. App. 1993) (discussing the statutory division of these two types of permanent partial disabilities). In making its findings and conclusions the agency addressed and analyzed the differing opinions of various medical expert witnesses. It also found, for stated reasons, that portions of Goodman’s testimony were lacking in credibility. The relevant parts of the agency’s decision were affirmed on judicial review by the district court and on appeal by this court.

On February 4, 2005, Goodman commenced a review-reopening case against Snap-On. As relevant to this appeal, Goodman sought workers’ compensation benefits for complex regional pain syndrome (formerly called reflex sympathetic dystrophy). In its review-reopening decision the agency determined, in relevant part:

The issue of whether [Goodman] sustained [reflex sympathetic dystrophy] or [complex regional pain syndrome] that arose out of his employment on February 27, 1999 was raised and decided in the [2002] arbitration proceeding. Because the issue has previously been determined adversely to [Goodman], [Goodman] is barred from re-litigating this issue on review-reopening.

In its April 4, 2008 judicial review ruling the district court affirmed the agency’s determination, concluding that “issue preclusion applies, and Goodman is barred from relitigating the causation issue in this review-reopening proceeding.” On appeal to this court Goodman claims:

The commission and district court misapplied the review-reopening statute [Iowa Code section 86.14(2)] and claim/issue preclusion rules.

In exercising its power of judicial review of contested case decisions of the workers' compensation commissioner the district court acts in an appellate capacity to correct errors of law of the agency. *Grundmeyer v. Weyerhaeuser Co.*, 649 N.W.2d 744, 748 (Iowa 2002). "In reviewing the district court's decision, we apply the standards of [Iowa Code] chapter 17A to determine whether the conclusions we reach are the same as those of the district court." *Mycogen Seeds v. Sands*, 686 N.W.2d 457, 464 (Iowa 2004).

We have carefully reviewed the record, fully agree with and find no error in that portion of the district court's ruling that is challenged on appeal, and thus affirm the district court's affirmance of the workers' compensation commissioner's review-reopening decision. See Iowa Ct. R. 21.29(1)(d), (e).

**AFFIRMED.**