6 Owners Agree to Eliminate Poisonous Lead Paint From Properties

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Of The Bulletin Staff

Six Philadelphia property owners yesterday entered into consent decrees with the city in its drive to eliminate the hazards of lead poisoning to children.

The six court orders approved by Common Pleas Judge Robert N. C. Nix Jr. were among 19 separate legal actions charging violations of the Philadelphia code.

Judge Nix issued orders to two other owners to bring their properties into compliance; dismissed one law suit; found three already in compliance; and contined seven.

The city's action stemmed from the death of a child last year and permanent injury to many others from lead poisoning. The children are poisoned when they chew on painted surfaces such as window sills, door frames and other household objects.

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Health Hazard

Inspections by health department officials in many homes where children were hospitalized, the suits state, disclosed numerous surfaces covered with paint containing concentration of lead above the one percent maximum under the law.

This creates a health hazard of lead poisoning to children, according to Assistant City Solicitor Frederick L. Voigt.

Inspections of suspected homes were started last summer. The laws suits were filed by the law department after subsequent inspections by the health department showed the landlords failed to correct the conditions.

The city sought fines of $300 per day for each day of violation. In the consent decree cases the owners agree to comply within two weeks to a month. Otherwise they will be subject to civil contempt of court.

Six Agree to Comply

Those agreeing to remove all lead paint in excess of the one percent maximum are:

Jose Aponte, 2235 N. Mascher st., violations show up to 37.06 percent lead concentration.

Elliott and Sonndra Ziegler, 4755 N. 7th st., up to 6.76 percent concentration.

Willie Saunders, 1132 W. Oxford st., owner of 1244 W. Huntingdon st., up to 3.31 percent.

Willie Brown, 2724 N. 16th st., up to 5.40 percent.

Middle Atlantic Investment Corp., 2044 Chestnut st., owner of 729 Corinthian st., up to 16.17 percent.

Isabela Pacheco, 1603 N. Marshall st., up to 30.28 percent.

Ordered to Comply

Ordered to comply within one week was Charles Bopp, 1416 W. Tioga st., owner of 1747 N. Marshall st., where the city charges violations caused the death of Jennifer Crawford; and permanent harm to Jeffrey and Jessica Crawford. Concentrations were up to 32.55 percent.

Repairs within two weeks are to be made by Earl Halpern, 1727 W. Columbia av., owner of 1017 W. Arizona st. Violations showed concentrations up to 15.40 percent.

Three owners who brought their properties into compliance were: Ben Reed, Bala-Cynwyd, and Charles C. and Maria Hibbs, 4812 Rising Sun av., owner of 2640 N. Sartain st., concentrations of 9.18 percent; Albert J. Kaytes, 4711 Rising Sun av., owner of 811 W. Cumberland st., concentrations of 44.16 percent; Julia Seawright, 3613 N. 18th st., concentrations of 24.61 percent.

Suits Continued

Suits against these owners were continued: Margarita Alices, 928 N. 7th st., Camden, N. J., owner of 627 W. Oxford st., 4.25 percent; Sadie Farrow, administratrix of estate of Margie Brown, 2144 N. Fairhill st., 19.02 percent; George M. Pinkett, 2828 N. 24th st., 3.51 percent; Francis Schmid, 223 E. Cambria st., 22.86 percent; A. M. Ashhurst, 1418 N. 59th st., owner of 1540 N. 18th st., 27.22 percent; Clarence Booker, 5723 Pine st., owner of 2911 N. 11th st., 17.66 percent; Douglas and Ethel Peoples, 1213 S. Ruby st., 20.02 percent.

The city's complaint against Robert Redding, 2317 N. 3d st., for violations of 35 percent was dismissed.

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Moving against lead paint poisoning

As the American Public Health Association has pointed out, the lead poisoning epidemic in urban ghettos is a side effect of dilapidated housing.

The victims, children between the ages of one and six who eat paint chips, may suffer such serious effects as blindness, mental retardation, and chronic kidney disease.

The tragedy of child lead poisoning would not occur if the 21-year-old national goal of a safe and sanitary house in a decent environment had not proven so elusive. Yet there is no need for lead paint poisoning to endlessly await this long-postponed main show from the [illegible].

The proposal of the newly formed Citywide Coalition against Lead Paint Poisoning follows lines that the American Public Health Association, among others, has recommended. The Coalition has added an intriguing fillip to this commonsense detection, education and control program: that the city contract the work of removing lead paint to businesses located and run by residents within the target areas.

What dollar sign is to be stamped on this program remains as yet uncertain. Whatever the figure, it must be weighed not only against other competing priorities within the city's health department, but also against the health and education costs to both city and state of those lives maimed by an eradicable disease.