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*"The safety of the people
is the highest law"*
-CICERO

Look Out for Lead Paint

500 Kids in Macon County Poisoned

Lead-based paint poisoning presents a genuine health risk to the children of our community. Toddlers are especially vulnerable, but kids up to age 9 are at risk too. The data from the health department shows over 500 cases of lead poisoning in Macon County. Investigators from the health department told me that about 60% of the homes and apartments in Decatur have lead paint.

Where to Get Paint Tested

The Macon County Health Department (423-6988) will test paint chips from your home to determine if lead-based paint is present. Or you can buy a lead test kit at the paint store for about \$12.

A Recent Court Case in Decatur

Recently, I took a lead paint poisoning case to the Illinois Appellate Court in Springfield. The court ruled in favor of the 2 year old twin children and said that the kids are entitled to a trial against the landlord. The children's doctor says they have learning and speech disabilities as a result of the lead poisoning. For your information a H&R newspaper article that describes the case is included.

Lead paint poisoning is preventable. Be alert for peeling, cracking and chipping paint in homes built before 1978. Old lead paint often has a "checker-board" cracking appearance. I hope this information helps.

Respectfully,



William C. Faber, Jr.

Twins' mother wins appeal to revive lead paint case

By **THERESA CHURCHILL**
H&R Senior Writer

DECATUR — Five-year-old twins Mikala and Mikal Price, who suffered lead poisoning as toddlers, may finally get their day in court.

The 4th District Appellate Court on Friday ruled that Macon County Circuit Associate Judge Thomas Little erred when he dismissed their lawsuit against Macon County Title LLC and its owner Andrew Chiligris for leasing their family a house that contained lead-based paint.

Jenny Price, the children's mother, said Tuesday she was surprised by the ruling but happy because a trial might make more parents aware of the danger children face from living in homes painted before lead-based paint was banned in 1978 for use in housing.

Children, who tend to put their hands and other objects into their mouths, are at risk for lead poisoning from flakes of deteriorating paint.

Price added that the twins, now kindergarteners at South Shores School, have had speech and learning delays because of the elevated levels of lead their physician found in their blood in November 2001 when they were 17 months old.

The family had been renting a house at 2075 E. William St. and managed by Chiligris,

since July 2000 when the twins were 3 months old. The family now lives elsewhere.

Chiligris and his company argued they did not know the house contained lead-based paint until notified by the Macon County Health Department in December 2001, and Little found in June 2005 that because of that, they could not be held liable for its damage.

The appellate court, however, ruled that the children did not have to prove defendants knew about the hazard before exposing them to it.

"In fact, plaintiffs produced the only evidence of duty that the law requires," Justice Robert Steigmann wrote, "namely, defendants' violation of the municipal ordinance and federal EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)."

Neither Chiligris nor his attorney, Evan Johnson, could be reached for comment Tuesday about whether they will appeal the ruling to the Illinois Supreme Court.

Bill Faber, the attorney for the children, said if the defendants do not act on an appeal to the state Supreme Court within 30 days, the case will be set for trial in Macon County Circuit Court later this year.

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