

BUGGED OVER INCESSANT BUG-SPRAY USE, EX-TEACHER SUES DISTRICT



An ex-teacher at Excelsior Springs High School is suing the district alleging that the officials in the school sprayed so much bug-repellants that it made her unwell. The teacher, Lois Thomas said that the officials sprayed a lot at the building where she used to teach family consumer science. She alleges that the spraying did not stop even after she told them that it was making her sick. Keeping track of her health and maintaining a record, helped her to identify when her health problems would begin. She discovered that the trouble happened only when she was in school. Thomas said, "I'm not having the muscle spasms, the heart palpitations, the rashes, since I've left, all those things have cleared up." She said, that even her doctor wrote a letter to the district asking them to desist from spraying pesticides in her room. Following the letter, the officials stopped spraying in her room, but continued to spray in other places in and around the building where she taught, including a teacher's lounge that she used. "I did think they were spraying excessively," she said. "At one point, there were five different sprays in 35 days." Her lawyer says, that school records reveal that the district spent \$24,000 spraying to eliminate bugs, during the year, Thomas taught. She alleges, says that there were no bugs in the school and neither were there bugs in her classroom. "If anything would have bugs, it would be where there were five kitchens and a food pantry," she said. "We had 500 kids running around every day." In Her lawsuit she charges the district with discrimination, saying that they didn't do enough to address the problem. One administrator chided her and said that she was like the "The Bubble Boy" who got sick from everything. "I mean, it really wasn't funny, because I was dealing with a lot of health issues at this point," she said. Thomas said that her lawyer had not served the district with paperwork announcing the lawsuit. The district preferred to remain silent and made no comments on the lawsuit. A pesticide industry trade association statement revealed that Missouri has no state laws governing the use and spraying of pesticides on school property.

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