

COURT ROUNDUP

Spelter area residents signing up for land, home cleanups

Part of class-action lawsuit settlement

by Matt Harvey
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SPELTER — About 330 to 350 people have signed up for cleanup of land and homes as part of a class-action settlement involving DuPont and the old Spelter smelter property.

Michael Jacks, executive director of the settlement claims office, said residents have continued to sign up this week and can continue to do so until Oct. 10. He anticipates an even larger turnout as word spreads from neighbor to neighbor.

Registrants have been from throughout the class area, but most are from the Spelter zone that's closest to the old plant, Jacks said.

Residents in that zone are looking at a \$5,000 "inconvenience" payment for testing and removal and replacement of their soil. Residents in other zones will receive a \$500 "inconvenience" payment for cleanup of their homes.

Those who want to sign up for property cleanup likely only need a photo ID and a current tax ticket, Jacks said. He added that home remediation signups have seemed easier in some respects than signups for medical monitoring.

There are about 2,500 properties that are eligible for cleanup, Claims Administrator Ed Gentle has said.

So far, 3,700 people have signed up for medical monitoring, according to Jacks and Christy Mullins, executive assistant for the claims office.

Those who register for that program are getting \$400 payouts. There are no payouts for simply signing up for property remediation, where \$34 million is the extent of money available for all work.

Medical tests that are part of medical monitoring are paid for on an as-needed basis by DuPont.

The claims office is located at the Spelter fire hall and open to the public.

Friday, Sept. 2, 2011

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Ohio registry

Also Thursday, Keeley sentenced Zackary Scott Watkins, 31, of Jackson, Mich., to 1 1/4 years in prison for failing to update his sex-offender registration.

Wrongdoing occurred from July through Sept. 16 in Clarksburg, according to a court filing.

Keeley ordered the federal term to run consecutively to time Watkins is already serving in Michigan. The defendant also will have to spend 10 years on federal supervised release once he's freed, Keeley ruled.

Also:

■ Harrison Circuit Judge

Thomas A. Bedell has signed an order authorizing soil testing on 24 more properties in the DuPont Spelter smelter class-action lawsuit.

The settlement claims office is trying to complete a property cleanup plan. Up to this point, payment for soil testing had been authorized only in the zone closest to the plant.

But six of the 24 homes are actually next to the fenced-in zinc smelter site, according to court filings. They're located on Upper B Street in Spelter.

Claims Administrator Ed Gentle sought the testing on those properties to see if cleanup is suggested there.

In addition to property cleanup, lawyers for the class

action and DuPont also have agreed to a medical monitoring program.

The claims office is working on implementing that, as well.