

Kotzebue Named in Quarter Million Dollar Sewer Suit

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Superior Court Judge William Sanders has granted a court order against the city of Kotzebue in a quarter-million dollar lawsuit filed by Gordon and Janet Heitzeberg. The Heitzebergs went to court after the City began pumping raw sewage onto the lot occupied by their rented house trailer. The City had been pumping the sewage from a sewer manhole to the lagoon behind Kotzebue when the hose used for that purpose began leaking, releasing the sewage onto the Heitzeberg's lot.

Sanders' action directs the city to stop dumping the sewage, to remove the sewage already there, to make sure that as the sewage melts during breakup it is pumped or ditched away from the Heitzeber's trailer, to disinfect the area under the trailer, and to install a walkway of wooden pallets leading to the trailer.

Shortly after the order was granted (April 29), Gordon Heitzeberg stated that the City had begun the cleanup, as directed. "There are a couple of things that need to be worked out, but on the whole I'm pleased with the progress," he

said.

The Sanders order does not address the issue of the \$250,000 in damages sought by the Heitzebergs, which is to be resolved later. "I have been out of

pocket on this for a considerable amount of money, and I expect to be out of pocket still as the cleanup progresses, so I really don't think I have any choice but to seek compensation for

damages I've actually incurred," Heitzeberg said.

"The area of punitive damages is one we're discussing right now," he added.