

ASHA hit with suit

A class action suit has been filed against the Alaska State Housing Authority on behalf of some 300 rural Alaskans who say agency housing is "unfit and uninhabitable."

The suit filed in Anchorage Superior Court cites swaying foundations, poor insulation, leaky roofs and nonfunctioning heaters. The suit says ASHA "intentionally misrepresented" the dwellings as "fit for the climatic conditions in which they were built." It says the agency knew the dwellings "contained design defects and inferior materials and workmanship and were therefore unfit and uninhabitable."

ASHA Executive Director Harry Goldbar says the suit was filed in state court after a similar suit was dismissed in federal court.

He says ASHA is working to resolve problems at remote housing projects. He says the agency has asked the legislature for additional money to help with repairs.

The suit was filed by Alaska Legal Services on behalf of 335 persons living in housing built under the 1969-70 Alaska Remote Housing Implementation Plan. Villagers named in the suit are from Akiachak, Chefnak, Emmonak, Kiana, Kivalina, Kotlik, Minto, Noorvik, Quinhagak, Shishmaref, Shevak, Scammon Bay, Hooper Bay, Point Hope, Selawik, Buckland, Pilots Station and Mountain Village.