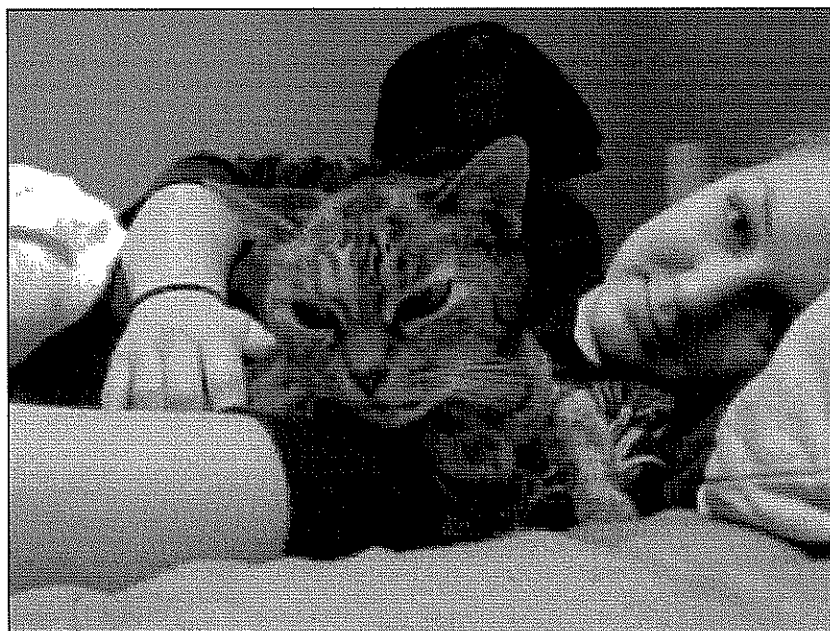


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New Local Lawsuits Against Poisoned Pet Food Launched

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The official death toll is 16.

The possible real number could be in the hundreds.

Rat poison found in a Streetsville pet food company's products has already led to numerous class action lawsuits against Menu Foods.

And now there's a new one, this time filed by three grieving families who claim their animals died or got sick after consuming the tainted products.

But Menu Foods isn't the only one on the list of those being blamed.

The suit also names Iams, Nutro Products and Wal-Mart and seeks to join an existing proceeding announced last week, that includes Loblaws and Sobeys, where the products were sold.

The lawyer behind the new case, Ted Charney, notes other companies could be added to the list as the legal

proceedings continue.

The suit is seeking damages worth \$60 million.

Leona Landry is one of those staking a claim. She claims her cat, Gizmo, died of kidney failure after eating some of the recalled foods.

Susan Mallatratt alleges her beagle Suze succumbed to the same ailment for the same reason.

And a man named Danny Salvador Haig-Carter maintains his Doberman puppy Titan rang up huge vet bills and was sick for days after ingesting the questionable nourishment.

All are seeking unspecified damages against the firms involved.

Holly Raven knows the pain they're going through. She believes she lost her cat Angel to the tainted meals. The 11-year-old feline became so sick, she had to be put down.

Even now, the tears won't stop coming.

"She was eating it up until the day we put her down," she cries. "Knowing that what she was eating was making her sick and still having to give it to her was just ..." Then her voice trails off as she's overcome with emotion.

But she does find the strength to utter one word about what her lost pet meant to her. "Everything," she says softly.

A class action suit brings interested parties pursuing a similar legal goal together, saving on lawyers fees and potentially strengthening individual cases through sheer force of numbers. (For more on what a class action is, [click here.](#))

Although a major recall of 95 varieties of food has already been well publicized ([click here to see the brands involved](#)), lawyers are urging owners who may want to join this latest legal fight not to return the food but to keep it for testing and potential evidence.

They also advise those who suspect their pet may have succumbed to the accidental poisoning to order a post mortem on the animal to establish further evidence.

A U.S. veterinarians' website suggests as many as 470 dogs and cats in the U.S. may have suffered kidney failure as a result of their exposure to the foods, and that up 104 of them may have died.

Menu Foods is bracing for what comes next. The company has been inundated by an estimated 200,000 phone calls from frantic pet owners.

"Based on the number of calls we've gotten, chances are that it [the death toll] will increase," concedes spokeswoman Sarah Tuite.

The company has already announced that it will be compensating owners for their vet bills, but only if they can

prove one of their products resulted in an illness or a death.

"If the Menu Foods product is proven to be the cause of the sickness or death, Menu Foods will take responsibility certainly," she affirms.

None of the allegations in the suits have been proven in court.

If you think you have a case, [click here](#) for more information.

To read **Consumer Specialist Jee-Yun Lee's** blog on this story, [click here](#).