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Woman banned from home

Alcoholic locked out for one year needs treatment, judge says

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A judge has agreed with the city of West St. Paul that a homeowner should be barred from living in her own house for a year.

District Judge Leslie Metzen made the ruling in the case of Alice Krengel, an alcoholic who city officials say has been running a flophouse from her home on Allen Avenue. Since being ordered out of the home Aug. 3, Krengel has been living in homeless shelters and with friends. Metzen's ruling allows Krengel to return home Aug. 3, 2007.

"If (Krengel) is barred from her home, she may seek the chemical dependency treatment she desperately needs, followed by a long-term placement in a halfway house," Metzen ruled.

Krengel couldn't be reached for comment. But in previous interviews, she has said she is a victim of a scheme by city officials and Metzen to acquire her house, subdivide her lot and generate extra property tax by permitting construction of a second home on the property.

In siding with the city, however, Metzen cited numerous violations of the state's nuisance law.

Metzen noted that police have been called to Krengel's home 180 times since 1990, including 29 incidents in a one-year period ending July 2005. Neighbors also testified about nine additional incidents in the 12 months ending July 2005 that were not reported to police.

"Alice Krengel has intentionally permitted a number of highly intoxicated persons to be on her property on numerous occasions, disturbing and annoying the peace and quiet enjoyment of her surrounding neighbors; she has endangered her own health and welfare by her association with unruly, intoxicated guests who have committed assaults in her presence," Metzen wrote.

"Ms. Krengel admitted she invited many of the 'unwanted guests' into her home because they paid her for shelter. It was not until July 2005 that she sought restraining orders to keep certain of her acquaintances away from her and her property."

Krengel entered into an agreement with the city Aug. 22, 2005, to fix the problems, but repeatedly violated that agreement, right up through August of this year, Metzen said.

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