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## Suit against GM claims mold in Escalade caused depression

Bloomberg Business News  
Published 05:30 a.m., Friday, May 17, 2002

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WATAUGA, N.C. -- General Motors Corp. is being sued by a man who says mold in his Cadillac sport utility vehicle caused permanent injuries that left him suffering chronic depression and unable to work. [Timothy Everett Greene](#) blames GM and a GM dealership for his depression, memory loss, tremors and breathing problems. The lawsuit says faulty weatherstripping in his 1999 Cadillac Escalade led to rainwater leaks, which allowed the mold to grow. The

GM dealer in Watauga failed to fix the vehicle and offered the church pastor a less expensive SUV as a replacement, his lawsuit says.

"I don't know what the case is worth, but we feel it's worth millions of dollars, considering what's happened" to Greene, said his lawyer, [David Duffus](#). "He's had to give up his church, and he can't sing any more."

Detroit-based GM, the world's largest automaker, says it hasn't had any similar claims of illness caused by mold. Corporate defense lawyer [Peter Lynch](#) of Philadelphia said the case may remain a novelty. Scientists have yet to prove that mold leads to permanent illness, he said.

Still, allegations of mold-related damage to homes and businesses have led to hundreds of millions of dollars in insurance claims, said insurance analyst A.M. Best Co. of Oldwick, N.J. The company-paid claims in Texas alone are expected to total \$700 million this year.

GM spokesman [Jay Cooney](#) said the company isn't responsible for Greene's illness.

"This is the only lawsuit of its kind that we've ever received," Cooney said. "So people can decide for themselves if this is a problem with 90,000 Escalades."

The Mack Brown dealership offered to replace the Escalade with a lower-priced SUV and planned to charge Greene for the leather seats recommended by his doctor, the lawsuit said.

Duffus said he expects more lawsuits to be filed when more people realize their cars can pose a toxic mold health risk. He said Greene's case is the only such lawsuit he is handling, though he's heard from other attorneys considering similar suits.

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