

Lafayette home buyers find meth at levels among highest in Colorado

By Tom McGhee *The Denver Post* *The Denver Post*
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John and Carla Hanks were pulling up carpets and cleaning the run-down house they had just purchased in Lafayette when a neighbor stopped by and said, "You do know the guy was cooking meth in the house?"

"That was the first we had heard" that the home they had just bought from Kenneth Harrison Dimon was contaminated, John Hanks said Sunday.

Last week, a Boulder County grand jury indicted Dimon, who had lived with a child and a woman at 100 W. Spaulding St., charging him with theft, child abuse, forgery and reckless endangerment.

"Expert evidence shows that samples taken from this address proved to be among the highest levels recorded at confirmed methamphetamine houses in Colorado," according to the indictment.

Dimon moved into the property in 1998 and contracted with a real-estate agent to sell it in the summer of 2010.

The child who lived with him had been taken to the emergency room at least six times during the first three years of life, once for unexplained shaking of limbs and a sudden inability to walk, according to the indictment.

In April 2011, Dimon sold the house to the Hankses, who paid for the property using savings and two Elevations Credit Union mortgages.

"Mr. Dimon received a balance of \$103,154.35, which was immediately wired into his bank account. To this day, Mr. Dimon has retained the entire proceeds of the sale, and no portion of the money has been returned or refunded to the victims," according to the indictment.

In 2006, state lawmakers approved a law holding sellers liable if they do not disclose to buyers that their property has been used as a meth lab, and if it had, that the property has been cleaned up according to state standards. The law also allows buyers to request that the property be tested for evidence of methamphetamine production.

Dimon didn't decontaminate the house, nor did he disclose to the buyers that he had manufactured meth within its walls, the indictment says.

The Boulder County Public Health Department told the Hankses to move out after the couple hired a company to test for the drug and found the house was contaminated.

They had lived there for only three weeks, John Hanks said.

"Their possessions, which had only been at the property for a matter of weeks, were already so contaminated that they were advised that they should leave these behind also," the indictment said.

For each pound of meth produced, 5 to 6 pounds of hazardous waste are generated, "posing immediate and long-term environmental health risks," according to information about the drug on the website of the Partnership for a Drug-Free America.

Dimon was arrested in New Hanover County, N.C., and is in jail there, according to the New Hanover County Sheriff's Office.

A man who answered the phone at an address in North Carolina that is associated with Dimon said only that he is in jail.

Buying the home led to a financial disaster for the Hankses, who are still paying on the mortgage and ran up credit-card debt for testing and other expenses related to it, said John Hanks.

The Hankses won a lawsuit against Dimon, but they don't expect to recoup their losses from him.

"This has been two years of financial hell for us," Hanks said. "After two years of us getting all the pain and difficulty, it is nice to see an arrest."

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