

LODI KIDS SHELTER CITED AS ILLEGAL BOARDINGHOUSE

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A McKinley Avenue house being used to shelter youngsters enrolled in a drug rehabilitation program has been cited by the building inspector as an illegal boardinghouse.

Named in the citation were Joe Costello, owner of the house at 118 McKinley Ave., and tenants Rosemary Sherry and Michael Lau. The borough building inspector, Gaetano "Guy" Lisa, said he acted on the basis of information provided by police and neighbors.

Borough Administrator John Curran said the house apparently was being used by the KIDS of Bergen County Inc. drug rehabilitation program. A similar case concluded last month with a municipal judge ruling that a Hasbrouck Heights couple cannot continue to use their house as temporary quarters for the teen-age clients of KIDS because of restrictions in the zoning code.

The landlord and tenants are violating borough laws forbidding a business in a two-family zone and running a boardinghouse without a certificate of occupancy, Lisa said. Borough law defines a boardinghouse as "any house, or building portion thereof, in which three or more persons are furnished lodging or rooming accommodations for hire or otherwise." An apartment house is defined as having independent living units with separate kitchen and sanitation facilities.

Sherry, Lau, and Costello were unavailable for comment Friday. A court hearing on the summons is set for Oct. 17. If found guilty, the defendants could face fines of up to \$500 apiece.

In the Hasbrouck Heights case, Judge Harry H. Chandless Jr. imposed a \$500 fine and suspended 30-day jail sentences for Billy and Susan McCoy of 53 Central Ave. He found them guilty of violating an ordinance that bars more than three unrelated guests from staying in a single-family home. Neighbors reported that the house had held up to 10 youngsters from the KIDS program. Information was unavailable on the status of the youths after the case was decided.

The long-term impact of the Hasbrouck Heights decision is unclear. But Miller Newton, the director of KIDS of Bergen County Inc., said at the time that it could have a devastating effect on the future of the program if it were repeated in other communities. Newton did not return repeated phone calls last week.

KIDS, which treats 125 teen-agers with drug, alcohol, eating, and other behavioral disorders, has an undisclosed number of host homes throughout the county.

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