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### Parents suing Mattel

*Jason Pesick, Staff Writer*

Two Fontana parents have filed a class-action lawsuit against toy maker Mattel for selling dangerous toys. The suit, filed Aug. 20 in Los Angeles County Superior Court, blasts Mattel for selling toys made in China that contained lead and magnets that could fall off and choke small children.

"Mattel is not playing fair," said Jeffrey **Killino**, a Philadelphia attorney representing the parents, Michael and Adrian Powell, and their children, Megan and Morgan.

The parents, he said, filed the suit on their children's behalf.

The suit calls for funding to conduct blood tests on children to see if they have been exposed to lead.

It cites fears about the potential health effects of lead poisoning, including interfering with mental and physical development.

The Powells, through their attorney, declined to comment.

It is unclear whether their children have been tested for lead, or whether they have been injured by any of the toys.

Officials for Mattel did not return requests for comment about the lawsuit.

In a news release issued to announce the Aug. 14 recall, Mattel's senior vice president of worldwide quality assurance, Jim Walter, said the company has strengthened its quality control procedures.

"The safety of children is our primary concern, and we are deeply apologetic to everyone affected," Chairman and CEO Robert Eckert said.

The suit came only days after Mattel, which includes brands like Barbie, Hot Wheels, Matchbox, Tyco, Fisher-Price and American Girl, announced a recall on Aug. 14 of 435,000 toys of the "Cars" character Sarge and more than 18 million magnetic toys.

On Aug. 1, the El Segundo-based company recalled more Fisher-Price toys.

In the last few months, other products from China, including toothpaste, pet food ingredients and hundreds of thousands of tires have been recalled.

"It's getting to be an epidemic," said **Killino**, who was behind the tire recall.

He emphasized the importance of quality control that includes random and third-party inspections.

The Powells are asking for money for the lead testing only, he said.

"They're not seeking any money for themselves."

**Killino** said he is preparing a separate suit on behalf of people who have tested positive for lead. That suit could seek further damages.

Since the suit was filed last week, **Killino** said he has had two lawyers besides himself helping to manage all the calls they're receiving from people who want to join his legal efforts.

"I can't return all the calls," he said.

It wouldn't be difficult for Mattel, which had \$5.65 billion in revenue last year, to pay for the testing, **Killino** said.

"They don't want to support any effort where it can be determined which children have lead poisoning from their toys."

**Killino** said he is continuing to test toys for safety in laboratories.

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