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Five more counties file lawsuits against pharmaceutical companies for opioid epidemic

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 By [Kyla Asbury](#) | [Dec 17, 2018](#)


MOUNDSVILLE — Five county commissions are joining in on dozens of lawsuits filed against Purdue Pharma and many other pharmaceutical companies for the opioid crisis.

The county commissions of Monongalia, Marion, Doddridge, Randolph and Upshur filed lawsuits against Purdue Pharma, The Purdue Frederick Company, Mark Radcliffe, Mark Ross, Patty Carnes, Teva Pharmaceuticals, Cephalon, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Ortho-McNeil-Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Johnson & Johnson, Endo Health Solutions, Actavis, Actavis Pharma, Watson Pharmaceuticals, Watson Laboratories, McKesson Corporation, Cardinal Health, AmerisourceBergen Drug Corporation, Rite Aid of Maryland, Kroger, CVS Indiana, Wal-mart Stores East, Goodwin Drug Company, Miami-Luken, John Does 1 through 3, West Virginia Board of Pharmacy, David Potters, Dr. Tressie Montene Duffy, Dr. Eugenio ALdea Menez, Dr. Scott James Feathers, Amy Lynn Beaver and Carl N. Hooker.

The commissions claim the defendants put their desire for profits about the interests of the health and well-being of the counties' residents.

"This case is about one thing: corporate greed," one of the complaints states.

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The opioid epidemic has ravaged West Virginia and much of the nation and has caused each of the counties to expend exorbitant amounts of money to combat the crisis.

The counties claim the defendants were aware of the dangers of prolonged use of opioids and the risk for addiction when they spent "hundreds of millions of dollars" to develop "seemingly truthful" scientific materials that misrepresented the risks and benefits of opioid long-term use.

West Virginia was flooded with opioids by the defendant distributors between 2007 and 2012, with approximately 780 million hydrocodone and oxycodone pills coming into the state, according to the suit, which is an average of 433 pain pills per resident of the state.

"While defendants were reaping excessive profits and paying out astronomical bonuses during this time, approximately 1,728 West Virginians suffered fatal overdoses from opioids, including many residents from Doddridge County, Marion County, Monongalia County, Randolph County and Upshur County," one of the complaints stated.

The counties are seeking compensatory and punitive damages with pre- and post-judgment interest. They are represented by Robert P. Fitzsimmons, Clayton J. Fitzsimmons and Mark A. Colantonio of Fitzsimmons Law Firm; Paul J. Napoli, Hunter J. Shkolnik, Joseph L. Ciaccio, Shayna E. Sacks and Salvatore C. Badala of Napoli Shkolnik; and Joseph F. Shaffer and Samuel D. Madia of Shaffer Madia Law.

Marshall Circuit Court Case numbers: 18-C-222, 18-C-233, 18-C-234, 18-C-235, 18-C-236



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