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Purdue Pharma family office move to WPB is 'salt in the wounds,' lawyer says

By [Alexandra Clough](#)

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Palm Beach County was the epicenter of the opioid crisis. Now it's home to an office of the family whose company has been blamed for the opioid epidemic.

An attorney who represents [Palm Beach County in its lawsuit against OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma](#) said it was "outrageous" that the family that owns the company [has set up shop in West Palm Beach](#) to manage the family fortune.

[The Palm Beach Post revealed on Tuesday](#) that the Sackler family, which owns Purdue Pharma, paid \$6.8 million for the Glidden Spina Architecture building at 207 Sixth St., just across the Intracoastal Waterway from Palm Beach.

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The building now is home to Summer Road LLC, an entity that manages the Sacklers' fortune. David Sackler, grandson of a family member that helped found Purdue Pharma, is chief executive of Summer Road, according to state records.

The building was purchased by a Sackler entity on July 31, less than two months before Purdue Pharma filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on Sept. 15.

The building purchase was surprising to Hunter Shkolnik, an expert in class and mass-action litigation. Shkolnik represents Palm Beach County, one of many municipalities across the country that have sued the company for its role in the opioid crisis.

[VIDEO: Opioid Crisis — Purdue Pharma's extraordinary success story explained](#)

Palm Beach and Broward counties were the epicenter of the prescription pill mills that led to people getting hooked on the addictive painkiller OxyContin, Shkolnik said.

“I find it outrageous that in a county that has been devastated by their actions, they’re now setting up their financial empire. It’s rubbing salt in the wounds. How do you do that?” Shkolnik said. “Thousands of people have been seriously injured or are dead by their products.”

Shkolnik said Palm Beach County’s lawsuit continues in federal court as part of a larger lawsuit involving many other municipalities.

The 2018 complaint laid out Palm Beach County’s argument in a straightforward way. “This case is about one thing: corporate greed,” the complaint alleges. “Defendants put their desire for profits above the health and well-being of Palm Beach County consumers at the cost of plaintiff.”

But the litigation’s path forward is unclear now that Purdue Pharma has filed for Chapter 11 protection in a bid to settle lawsuits filed by multiple states.

>>Opioid crisis: Palm Beach County’s opioid lawsuit swept up with suits from across America

The county’s claims “are in limbo right now” as parties wait to learn whether a judge will make all claimants abide by a settlement hammered out as part of the Chapter 11 filing — or whether claims against the company and the Sackler family can proceed, Shkolnik said.

The settlement will provide more than \$10 billion to help reimburse state and local governments and clean up the damage done by prescription painkillers and illegal opioids. The Sackler family would give up ownership of Purdue and contribute at least \$3 billion toward the settlement.

Some states, including Florida, have signed on to the bankruptcy to resolve claims.

On Wednesday, a spokesman for Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody said Florida “is one of the states leading the negotiations ... Florida is working extremely hard to ensure Purdue Pharma and the Sacklers pay billions of dollars

to account for their role in the opioid crisis.”

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Purdue Pharma’s lawyers say they will ask a judge to issue an injunction to halt efforts by state attorneys general who won’t sign on to the settlement and instead want to pursue claims against the family.

Massachusetts Attorney General Healey, for instance, said she would oppose any effort to stop her claim against the family from going forward. She wants to hold the Sackler family personally accountable.

So do state attorneys general in New York, New Jersey and North Carolina. “Our office intends to pursue financial discovery from the Sacklers,” said a spokeswoman for North Carolina State Attorney General Josh Stein.

The Sackler family has said it is not to blame for the opioid crisis. In June, David Sackler told Vanity Fair that the family has had to endure “vitriolic hyperbole” and “endless castigation.”

Protests have erupted at a New York museum that received Sackler money, and the founder of the Inside Philanthropy website has called the family’s charitable giving “blood money.”

Earlier this year, David Sackler and his wife, Joss, who together have three children, apparently decided to get away from the negative attention and resettle in Palm Beach, according to a May article in the New York Post.

Rumors quickly began flying on Palm Beach about properties the family may have purchased, but no home yet has been linked to the Sacklers.

Instead, the low-rise West Palm Beach office building on Sixth Street, next door to the Butcher Shop Beer Garden and Grill, is the first known property purchased by the Sacklers in Palm Beach County.

The building, the former Hopkins Marine Supply store, is just west of Flagler Drive and the Intracoastal Waterway.

The Glidden Spina building was purchased by an entity called WP Leasing LLC, whose managers are Leslie Schreyer and Jeffrey Robins, two lawyers with the New York law firm of Norton Rose Fulbright. According to an August article in the New York Times, the lawyers received subpoenas from the New York state attorney general in connection with its effort to track down the Sackler family's billions.

The purchase took the local real estate community by surprise because of the huge price paid for the 1950s-era building, which features a total of 11,288 square feet. Glidden Spina bought the former marine supply store building in \$1.4 million in 2014, then spent \$700,000 to design the interior.

aclough@pbpost.com

[@acloughpbp](#)