Realtor stowed away 25 feral cats in urine-drenched Florida home before selling it to clients: Lawsuit

It was the smell that tipped them off.

Having just closed on a Central Florida home for $200,000, newlyweds Daniel McKay and Katherine Pulker noticed a strong odor of cat urine when they went in to prepare the house for move-in day in the spring.

In a lawsuit first uncovered by the Tampa Bay Times, the couple accuses their Realtor, Debbie Clark of Link Realty, of using the property to house nearly 25 feral cats for her animal nonprofit and then masking the strong odor before selling them the home. Failing to disclose potential problems in a property is one of the most common ways for real estate agents to get sued by their buyers, according to real estate experts.

“Ms. Clark engaged in a scheme to conceal the damage done to the property, and the noxious odors emanating from the property by, but not limited to, installing new carpet, replacing baseboards, painting over urine saturated drywall and insulation, and through the use of masking deodorizers […],” McKay’s lawyer alleges in the complaint, filed on July 20.

Courtesy of realtor.com

The lawsuit further accuses Clark and Link Realty of negligence, breach of contract and failure to disclose hidden defects that make the property “uninhabitable.” While Clark has allegedly agreed to replace the house’s air conditioning unit and duct work, the newlyweds say they needed to hire extra workers and push back the day they can move into the house from May to early August.

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“We thought it would be, not a quick fix, but something we could handle quick and easy by our wedding day,” McKay told the Tampa Bay Times. “By the end of the first week, we realized we weren’t going to be able to handle it on our own.”

“We had to get contractors,” he added.”This is our first house. We’re a newlywed couple. We don’t have a ton of money.”

Neither Clark nor Link Realty responded to a request for comment on the lawsuit.

Email Veronika Bondarenko

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