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Owner of concrete firm files libel suit against Corporate Report Minnesota

By Susan Feyder; Staff Writer

The owner of a Dodge Center concrete-mixer company who is the subject of Corporate Report Minnesota's March cover story has sued the magazine for libel.

Garwin McNeilus, owner of McNeilus Companies Inc, filed the suit last week in Dodge County District Court. In his suit, McNeilus says there are at least 68 false and defamatory statements about him and his business in the article, "The Hardest Man in the Cement Mixer Business."

In a prepared statement, McNeilus' attorneys said that the suit was filed after Corporate Report Minnesota did not respond to requests for a retraction. Besides the magazine, the suit names as defendants author Denise Kotula and MCP Inc., the parent company of Corporate Report Inc.

Corporate Report Minnesota editor Terry Fiedler said Wednesday that the magazine had not yet reviewed the suit and he declined to comment on it. In an editor's note in the March issue, Fiedler described the story as "a portrait of a man of seeming contradictions. A generous, religious man, McNeilus was accused time and time again of crippling his rivals, rather than competing with them. His critics charge him with everything from predatory pricing to industrial espionage."



The suit says that as a result of the article, McNeilus has suffered lost income and harm to his reputation. Gerald Duffy, McNeilus' attorney, said he expects that the damages requested could be in the millions.



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