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CENTRAL FLORIDA THE AREA IN BRIEF

Schools plan refunds

May 7, 2006

KISSIMMEE -- Osceola School District and county authorities are preparing to refund up to \$1,815 to people who bought a home while the county's school-impact fee was being challenged in court.

The district and county government are expected to send letters soon to thousands of builders and homeowners who were charged higher impact fees while a lawsuit brought against the county by a home-builders group was pending.

The School Board last week approved a resolution that commits the school district to processing and evaluating refund claims for homes within Kissimmee and St. Cloud, if the cities refuse to handle them.

Osceola County, which plans to send refund letters out June 1 to owners and builders of 15,000 homes, will evaluate the applications for homes built in unincorporated parts of the county.

Homeowners or builders who paid school-impact fees between May 1, 2004, and Jan. 25, 2006, could receive \$1,815 for a single-family home, \$1,152 for a multifamily unit and \$870 per new mobile home.

Those figures represent the difference between the higher fees the county wanted to charge and the amounts a circuit judge ruled were fair.

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