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Wives of Snap-on dealers file lawsuit against company Complaint the company with misrepresenting projected earnings of franchi

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**By CAROLYN RUSHEFSKY
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A lawsuit was filed yesterday against Snap-on Tools (NYSE:SNA), charging the company misrepresented projected earnings of franchisees, including a former company representative on Staten Island, say.

Snap-on dealers sell tools and equipment directly to shop owners, managers and service technicians in automotive dealerships, body shops, independent repair shops, marinas, and wherever boats and other vehicles are repaired and maintained.

Snap-on representative, Jeff Goldwasser, whose territory ran along Clove Road, from Victory Boulevard to Richmond Terrace, from 1998 to 2002, said, "It was a very small territory. I had to share Staten Island with three others, and there were not enough automobile shops (to do business with)," he said.

The suit was filed yesterday in Superior Court of New Jersey in Middlesex, because Snap-on's Greater New York branch office is located in Edison, N.J., said Gerald Marks of Red Bank, N.J., the attorney who filed the case, and who is licensed to practice in New York and New Jersey.

"The company misrepresented (the number) of customer accounts," Marks charged. But the case was filed on behalf of the wives of former Snap-on franchisees, including Goldwasser's wife, Abbye, and three other wives. The four plaintiffs lost initial investments of over \$100,000 and owe Snap-on over \$715,000, Marks said.

Based on their contract, franchisees are not allowed to take the company to court, said Marks, explaining the reason the franchisees' wives filed the lawsuit.

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Goldwasser, who lives in East Brunswick, N.J., is now working for another automotive company.

Richard Secor, a spokesman for Snap-on at its headquarters in Kenosha, Wis., said "Snap-on does not comment on specific dealer situations, but like any investment, simply purchasing a franchise does not guarantee success."

Secor added, "The vast majority of Snap-on dealers have told us that they are pleased with the franchise proposition. The Snap-on dealer business is growing and is well-respected by many stakeholders, including customers and franchisees. The company has over 4,000 dealers in the United States."

In trading yesterday, shares for Snap-on finished up 27 cents at \$32.62 on the New York Stock Exchange.

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