



Judge orders damages in Oakland police strip search

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A federal judge on Thursday ruled that Oakland police unlawfully strip-searched two men and ordered that the city pay them more than \$200,000.

Kirby Bradshaw and Spencer Lucas were among 44 plaintiffs to file suit against the city over the police department's strip-search policies.

U.S. District Court Judge Marilyn Hall Patel said Thursday that Officer Ingo Mayer and another officer had no probable cause and no reasonable suspicion for stopping Bradshaw and Lucas in December 2005 and forcing them to stand naked in the street. Mayer was in charge of the scene and made the decision to pull over the men's car and then strip-search them, according to the suit. The other officer was not named in the suit.

The officers pulled the men over near a busy corner of 32nd Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way across the street from a restaurant and convenience store. According to the lawsuit, they ordered the men out of their vehicle into the street, then forced them to pull down their pants and underwear.

It was about 8 a.m. and Lucas and Bradshaw had to stand naked in plain sight of children walking to school and a crowd gathered around the scene.

"(The officers) were driven by an effort to humiliate them," said John Burris, an attorney for the plaintiffs.

Mayer and the other officer denied that the men were strip-searched or that their pants were ever down.

According to the suit, after the search was over, the two officers

spoke with Lucas' parole officer, who said he had committed no violations of his parole, which would expire in 30 days. He was homeless after being arrested on a prior identify theft charge.

The officers then drove Lucas around Oakland and then to Richmond, the complaint says.

"This only exacerbated an already unlawful situation, compounding its unlawfulness," Patel said in her judgment.

Police found a BB gun at a former Richmond residence of Lucas, who spent seven months in custody as a result.

Patel awarded slightly more than \$100,000 in actual damages to each man. She will determine punitive damages at a future hearing.

In 2008, Patel struck down two policies related to strip-searches as unconstitutional. On Thursday, she dismissed the cases of three other men.

"That means there's 39 remaining," Attorney Michael Haddad said. "This is only the tip of the iceberg."

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