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Music Industry Targets Even Computer-Less

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By **TED BRIDIS**, AP Technology Writer

WASHINGTON - The recording industry has filed 41 more lawsuits against computer users in at least 11 states it said were caught illegally distributing songs over the Internet, continuing its aggressive campaign against online music piracy.

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The latest copyright suits this week bring to 382 filed since the Washington-based Recording Industry Association of America ([news - web sites](#)) announced its legal campaign nearly six months ago.

The group's president, Cary Sherman, said the group has no plans to cut back, even as media coverage over the continuing lawsuits wanes.

"People who engage in illegal file-sharing should be aware, whether or not they hear about it this month, that doesn't mean the enforcement program has been reduced in any way," Sherman said. "If anything it will be increased."

The recording industry is monitoring popular Internet services where computer users can download song files, searching for people illegally distributing the largest music collections. Court-issued subpoenas compel Internet providers to identify their customers linked to the online accounts used to download songs.

Among the RIAA's recent targets is retiree Ernest Brenot, 79, of Ridgefield, Wash., who wrote in a handwritten note to a federal judge that he does not own a computer nor can he operate one.

Brenot was accused of illegally offering for download 774 songs by artists including Vanilla Ice, U2, Creed, Linkin Park and Guns N' Roses.

Brenot's wife, Dorothy, said she and her husband were stunned by the claims, offended at the suggestion they listened to such music. Brenot was targeted in the previous round of 80 suits the recording organization filed late in October.

Brenot and her husband said their son-in-law briefly added Internet service to their own cable television account while living with the couple because Comcast Cable Communications Inc. said it would add a surcharge to send separate bills to the same mailing address.

"There's a mistake in this case," Dorothy Brenot said. "We're innocent in all of this, but I don't know how we're going to prove it."

The 41 most recent suits were filed against Internet users in Massachusetts, Colorado, Arizona, Connecticut, New Jersey, Wisconsin, Florida, Tennessee, Georgia, Illinois and Washington.

The recording industry also said Wednesday that it has reached financial settlements against at least 220 computer users. Defense lawyers familiar with some of the cases have said penalties ranged from \$2,500 to \$7,500 each.

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