

Foreclosure counseling available on Saturday 'helpline'

By The News-Gazette

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CHAMPAIGN – People with questions about home foreclosures can get them answered for free on Saturday, thanks to a "foreclosure helpline" sponsored by Attorneys' Title Guaranty Fund.

Volunteer real estate attorneys will offer legal counsel to anyone calling 1-800-252-0402 from 9 a.m. to noon that day.

The "foreclosure helpline" will provide advice in:

- How to determine your foreclosure risk level.
- How to avoid common mistakes that may lead to foreclosure.
- How to negotiate with banks and creditors.

The attorneys can discuss what to do if you fall behind in mortgage payments and how defaulting borrowers can keep their homes. They can also explain how to avoid mortgage rescue and modification scams.

According to Attorneys' Title, there were 102,643 foreclosure filings in Illinois between January and November 2008, with one in every 51 homes affected. During the same period in 2007, there were 80,918 foreclosure filings, with one in every 64 homes affected.

Attorneys' Title, a title insurance company with offices in Champaign and Chicago, has nearly 4,000 member attorneys across Illinois, southern Wisconsin and northern Indiana.

More information about foreclosure is available at the company's Web site, www.atgf.com. Click on the "Consumers, Realtors, Lenders" tab, then on "What You Need to Know About Foreclosure."

You'll find information on government-assistance programs and the Homeowners Preservation Foundation counseling service, among other resources.

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