



Kansas Courts News Release

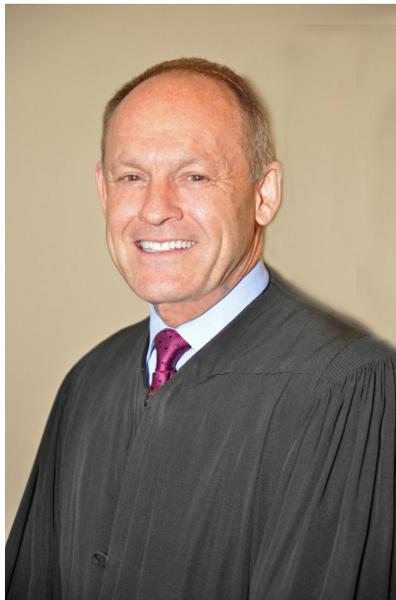
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District Judge Charles Droege

District Judge Charles Droege to sit with Kansas Supreme Court January 31

TOPEKA—District Judge Charles Droege of the 10th Judicial District has been appointed to sit with the Kansas Supreme Court to hear oral arguments in one case on the court's January 31 docket.

After hearing oral arguments, Droege will join Supreme Court justices in their deliberations and decision drafting.

"I am pleased that Judge Droege is taking time from his duties in the 10th Judicial District to sit with the Supreme Court," said Chief Justice Lawton Nuss. "It's a great help to our court, and we look forward to his contributions in deliberating and eventually deciding this case."

Droege has been a judge since August 2007. He hears cases in the 10th Judicial District, which is composed of Johnson County.

"I am pleased, honored, and humbled to be invited to sit with the Kansas Supreme Court and with the Supreme Court justices whom I have long admired and respected," Droege said. "I look forward to joining the court for this session and to serving Kansans in this capacity."

Droege, Overland Park, earned bachelor's and master's degrees in business from Wichita State University and a law degree from Washburn University School of Law. He worked in the Shawnee County District Attorney's Office in Topeka, then worked for law firms or was in private practice until becoming a judge. He also was city prosecutor and municipal judge for DeSoto, municipal judge for Edgerton, and was an administrative hearing officer for the Kansas Department of Revenue. He is a past president of the Johnson County Bar Foundation.

All Supreme Court oral arguments are webcast live through the *Watch Supreme Court Live!* link in the right-hand column of the Kansas Judicial Branch website at www.kscourts.org.

The case Droege will hear is the first one scheduled on the Supreme Court's 9 a.m. docket January 31:

Appeal No.116,307: Corvias Military Living LLC and Corvias Military Construction v. Ventamatic LTD and Jakel Inc.

Geary County: (Petition for Review) A military housing developer filed a product liability action against the manufacturer of a bathroom ceiling fan and its electric motor. The product at issue caused two house fires at the family housing neighborhood at Fort Riley. The Corvias entities filed their initial petition against Ventamatic, the manufacturer of the defective bathroom fans, and Jakel, the manufacturer of the defective fan motors, and various other parties in the chain of distribution. Corvias sought to dismiss all defendants except Ventamatic and Jakel. The district court granted Ventamatic and Jakel summary judgment as to all claims finding the economic loss doctrine barred recovery. The district court found the bathroom exhaust fans and housing units were integrated systems and that Corvias could not also recover under an implied warranty theory because bathroom exhaust fans are not inherently dangerous. The Court of Appeals reversed the district court and instead held the bathroom exhaust fans and housing units are not part of an integrated system. Issues on review are whether: 1) the district court erred when it held Corvias suffered only economic loss; 2) the district court erred when it held bathroom ceiling fans are not inherently dangerous if defectively manufactured; and 3) the Court of Appeal erred in overturning the district court's granting of summary judgment by altering Kansas law on the economic loss doctrine and the integrated systems rule.

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