

Drive-in and Sports Park settle light fight in North Ridgeville, OH !

ELYRIA, OH — The shows -- and the ball games -- will go on in North Ridgeville.

The owners of the **Aut-O-Rama Drive-in** and the **Ohio Sports Park** reached a court-approved agreement over the lights at the sports park, which had adversely affected the picture quality on screens at the drive-in.

Aut-O-Rama owner Deb Sherman said new light shields installed on four of the five fields have solved the problem. The last lights on one field are expected to be shielded soon and until that time, the ballpark must turn off it's lights 45 minutes after sundown.

"That's all it took, as we had asked for back in May," she said. "Once the shields were put on, our pictures were fine. And it only cost \$11,000, not the \$300,000 the ball park originally said it would cost."

The \$3 million, 67-acre Ohio Sports Park is about 600 feet from the drive-in across the Ohio Turnpike. In addition to its seven ball fields, it has outdoor basketball and volleyball courts and nine soccer fields.

The owner said in June that he went through the city's planning commission and received all the proper permits before opening the sports park.

At a hearing this morning, **Lorain County Common Pleas Court Judge Edward Zaleski** ordered Ohio Sports Park to turn off its remaining unshielded ballfield lights 45 minutes after sundown.

Since the days grow shorter the rest of the year, the court included a list of times that the lights are to be shut down through the drive-in's final week of the season on Oct. 9. This weekend, the ball park lights must be turned off by 9:38 p.m., on Oct. 9 they must be turned off by 7:41 p.m.

Sports park owner Larry Vassil signed the court judgment order today. He did not return calls for comment.

The judge ordered a conference on Oct. 23 to determine if the order is being followed. Sherman said she complained to the judge that the ball park had violated the judge's previous order to turn out lights at 45 minutes after sundown.

"The judge said that the curfew is the curfew, no more finishing an inning or extending the time for any reason," she said. "He said there could be fines, damages, even jail if it continues."

Sherman said the lights were hurting their business, which has been in operation at the same location since 1965.



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