

# Apple hit by lawsuit over in-app purchases by kids

April 19 2011, By PETER SVENSSON , AP Technology Writer

---

(AP) -- Apple is facing a lawsuit from a Pennsylvania man whose 9-year-old daughter racked up \$200 in charges buying "Zombie Toxin" and other game items on her iPod.

The lawsuit seeks class-action status, saying Garen Meguerian of Phoenixville is among many people with bill shock after children went on buying sprees in [iPhone](#), [iPad](#) and iPod games. These games are typically free to download, but players can buy items that speed up the game.

An Associated Press story in December highlighted the issue. In many cases, it appeared that children bought items such as "Smurfberries" from "Smurfs' Village" without knowing they were spending real money. iTunes didn't ask for a password for in-game purchases if it had been entered within the previous 15 minutes for any reason. This meant that parents could download a free app, hand over their devices to their kids, and later find big charges on their iTunes accounts.

Apple reversed the charges of complaining customers. It also tightened its password policy with a software update in March. Entering the password outside an app no longer triggers a password-free period for in-app purchases, which now have a separate 15-minute timer.

Apple spokeswoman Kristin Huguet said the company does not comment on pending litigation.

The [lawsuit](#) was filed last week in federal court in San Francisco. CNET reported on it earlier.

"Tap Zoo," a kid-oriented game that's free to download but charges for items, was the top-grossing app in the [App](#) Store on Tuesday.

©2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Citation: Apple hit by lawsuit over in-app purchases by kids (2011, April 19) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-04-apple-lawsuit-in-app-kids.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.