

NEWS RELEASE



Attorney General Edmund G. Brown Jr.
California Department of Justice
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Brown Sues Drywall Contractor For Exploiting Workers

LOS ANGELES—Citing the threat of a “shadowy, underground economy,” California Attorney General Edmund G. Brown Jr. today sued the Brinas Corporation, a Los Angeles drywall contractor that unlawfully forced its employees to work without the benefit of legally mandated conditions.

“The company exploited employees, engaged in unfair business practices and violated worker protections. Today’s lawsuit will send a strong message—California demands that workers be treated fairly and not be exploited in a shadowy, underground economy,” Attorney General Brown said.

In August, the Attorney General launched an investigation into the employment, payroll and record-keeping practices of the Brinas Corporation and its predecessor; B. Wallco, Inc. Officials investigated construction sites, interviewed witnesses and reviewed records.

Investigators found that the company engaged in flagrantly unlawful business practices to slash labor costs and underbid competition. Brinas participated in a variety of schemes to deny employee rights including:

- Failure to pay minimum wage
- Failure to pay overtime pay
- Failure to provide paid rest breaks
- Failure to provide a lunch break
- Failure to provide the tools necessary to perform the work
- Failure to provide pay check stubs
- Failure to provide accurate wages information to the Employment Development Department
- Failure to provide accurate information to the State Compensation Insurance Fund

Workers who labored for the drywall company suffered substantial monetary losses and are entitled to restitution. In this particular case, the attorney general brings a lawsuit to halt the company’s illegal practices and get restitution for the workers who lost wages during the last four years.

The attorney general enforces California laws that require fair business practices in order to protect working men and women and ensure a level playing field where all businesses adhere to the same rules of conduct. Brown sued Brinas under Business & Professions Code, section 17200, which expressly prohibits unlawful or unfair business practices.

Brinas Corporation was incorporated in Nevada in June 2003. It obtained a California contractors license on March 4, 2005 and recorded Jose Andres Garcia Brinas as its CEO. In 2004, the company’s predecessor B. Wallco was sued by a private plaintiff, Drywall Committee, for many of the same violations cited in today’s complaint. As part of a 2005 settlement, the company agreed to obey all laws and provide the Committee with information on all work in Southern California.

Brinas is currently known to be engaged in drywall installation at constructions including Triana at Warner Center in Woodland Hills, Archstone Warner Apartment Complex in Canoga Park, Broadstone Beaudry Apartments in the City of Los Angeles, and Reserve 4S Ranch in north San Diego County.

The state's lawsuit is attached.

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