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CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE SET

FEB 17 2006 - 9 AM

DEPARTMENT 212

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RUSSELL BRIMER

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
FOR THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO  
UNLIMITED CIVIL JURISDICTION

17 RUSSELL BRIMER, )  
18 )  
19 Plaintiff, )  
20 v. )  
21 LYNN ROBERTS INTERNATIONAL, INC.; )  
22 THE ALLEY; MAREK, INC.; and DOES 1 )  
23 through 150, inclusive. )  
Defendants. )

No. CEC 05444874

COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL  
PENALTIES AND INJUNCTIVE  
RELIEF

(Health & Safety Code §25249, et seq.)

RUSSELL BRIMER, by and through his counsel, on behalf of himself, on behalf all others  
similarly situated and on behalf of the general public, hereby alleges as follows:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

1. This Complaint is a representative action brought by plaintiff RUSSELL BRIMER,

COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

1 on behalf of citizens of the State of California, to enforce each citizen's right to be informed of the  
2 presence of and nature of toxic chemicals in consumer goods.

3 2. This Complaint seeks to remedy defendants' continuing failures to warn the citizens  
4 of the State of California about the presence of, the nature of, and such citizens' actual and  
5 potential exposure to lead present in or on consumer products placed into the stream of commerce  
6 by defendants.

7 3. Lead is a chemical that is identified in 22 C.C.R. §12000 that is known to the State  
8 of California to cause birth defects and other reproductive harm. Lead shall hereafter be referred to  
9 as the "LISTED CHEMICAL".

10 4. The consumer products containing the LISTED CHEMICAL, and for which  
11 defendants are responsible, are mugs and other ceramic containers intended for the consumption of  
12 food or beverages with colored artwork or designs (containing lead) on the exterior, including but  
13 not limited to, *Mug, Tex-Mex Chili Con Carne* (#0 37435 44540 3; #M404540) and *Mug, Texas*  
14 *Down Home Chili Authentic Taste Of The West* (#0 37435 44540 3; #M404540). All such  
15 consumer products containing the LISTED CHEMICAL shall hereafter be referred to as the  
16 "PRODUCTS".

17 5. Under California's Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, Health  
18 & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*<sup>1</sup> (hereafter "Proposition 65"), "No person in the course of doing  
19 business shall knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the state  
20 to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable warning to such  
21 individual...."

22 6. On February 27, 1987, the State listed lead as a chemical known to cause birth  
23 defects and other reproductive harm. This chemical became subject to the warning requirement  
24 one year later and was therefore subject to the "clear and reasonable warning" requirements of  
25 Proposition 65, beginning on February 27, 1988. (22 Code of Regulations §12000(b)(c); Health &  
26 Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*)

27  
28 <sup>1</sup> Unless specifically noted, all statutory citations refer to California law.



1           16.     MAREK manufactures, distributes and/or offers the PRODUCTS for sale or use in  
2 the State of California or implies by its conduct that it manufactures, distributes and/or offers the  
3 PRODUCTS for sale or use in the State of California.

4           17.     Defendants DOES 1-50 (hereafter "MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS") are each  
5 persons doing business within the meaning of Health & Safety Code §25249.11.

6           18.     MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS engage in the process of research, testing,  
7 designing, assembling, fabricating and/or manufacturing, or imply by their conduct that they  
8 engage in the process of research, testing, designing, assembling, fabricating and/or manufacturing,  
9 one or more of the PRODUCTS for sale, consumption or use in the State of California.

10          19.     Defendants DOES 51-100 (hereafter "DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS") are each  
11 persons doing business within the meaning of Health & Safety Code §25249.11.

12          20.     DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS distribute, exchange, transfer, process and/or  
13 transport one or more of the PRODUCTS to individuals, businesses or retailers in the State of  
14 California.

15          21.     Defendants DOES 101-150 (hereafter "RETAIL DEFENDANTS") are each persons  
16 doing business within the meaning of Health & Safety Code §25249.

17          22.     RETAIL DEFENDANTS offer the PRODUCTS for sale to individuals in the State  
18 of California.

19          23.     At this time, the true names of Defendants DOES 1 through 150, inclusive, are  
20 unknown to plaintiff, who therefore sues said defendants by their fictitious name pursuant to Code  
21 of Civil Procedure §474. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and on that basis alleges, that each of  
22 the fictitiously named defendants is responsible for the acts and occurrences herein alleged. When  
23 ascertained, their true names shall be reflected in an amended complaint.

24          24.     LYNN ROBERTS, THE ALLEY, MAREK, MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS,  
25 DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS, RETAIL DEFENDANTS, and Defendants DOES 1 through 150  
26 shall, where appropriate, collectively be referred to hereafter as "DEFENDANTS".  
27  
28

1  
2 **VENUE AND JURISDICTION**

3 25. Venue is proper in the San Francisco Superior Court, pursuant to Code of Civil  
4 Procedure §§394, 395, 395.5 because this Court is a court of competent jurisdiction, because one or  
5 more instances of wrongful conduct occurred, and continues to occur, in the County of San  
6 Francisco and/or because DEFENDANTS conducted, and continue to conduct, business in this  
7 County with respect to the PRODUCTS.

8 26. The California Superior Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to  
9 California Constitution Article VI, §10, which grants the Superior Court "original jurisdiction in all  
10 causes except those given by statute to other trial courts." The statute under which this action is  
11 brought does not specify any other basis of subject matter jurisdiction.

12 27. The California Superior Court has jurisdiction over DEFENDANTS based on  
13 plaintiff's information and good faith belief that each defendant is a person, firm, corporation or  
14 association that either is a citizen of the State of California, has sufficient minimum contacts in the  
15 State of California, or otherwise purposefully avails itself of the California market.  
16 DEFENDANTS' purposeful availment renders the exercise of personal jurisdiction by California  
17 courts consistent with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

18  
19 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

20 **(Violation of Proposition 65)**

21 28. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth herein,  
22 Paragraphs 1 through 27, inclusive.

23 29. The citizens of the State of California have expressly stated in the Safe Drinking  
24 Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, Health & Safety Code §25249.5, et seq. ("Proposition  
25 65") that they must be informed "about exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects and  
26 other reproductive harm." (Proposition 65, §1(b).)

27 30. Proposition 65 further states that, "No person in the course of doing business shall  
28 knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the state to cause cancer

1 or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable warning to such individual....”

2 31. Based on information and good faith belief, plaintiff alleges that, at all times  
3 relevant to this Complaint, DEFENDANTS have engaged in the sales of the PRODUCTS in  
4 violation Health & Safety Code §25249.6, *et seq.*, and that DEFENDANTS' offensive sale of the  
5 PRODUCTS has continued to occur beyond DEFENDANTS' receipt of plaintiff's 60-Day Notice  
6 of Violation. Plaintiff also alleges and believes that such violations will continue to occur into the  
7 future.

8 32. Beginning on July 8, 2005, "60-Day Notices" of Proposition 65 violations were  
9 provided to public enforcement agencies and to LYNN ROBERTS, THE ALLEY, and MAREK  
10 stating that exposures to the LISTED CHEMICAL were occurring in the State of California from  
11 the reasonably foreseeable uses of the PRODUCTS, without the individual purchasers and users  
12 first having been provided with a "clear and reasonable warning" regarding such exposure.

13 33. The appropriate public enforcement agencies have failed to commence and  
14 diligently prosecute a cause of action, under Health & Safety Code §25249.6, *et seq.*, against  
15 DEFENDANTS based on the claims asserted in Plaintiff's 60-Day Notices.

16 34. At all times relevant to this action, the PRODUCTS contained the LISTED  
17 CHEMICAL.

18 35. At all times relevant to this action, the DEFENDANTS knew or should have known  
19 that the PRODUCTS contained the LISTED CHEMICAL.

20 36. At all times relevant to this action, the LISTED CHEMICAL was present in or on  
21 the PRODUCTS in such a way as to be available for transfer or release from PRODUCTS to  
22 individuals during the reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS.

23 37. The normal and reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS has caused and  
24 continues to cause an exposure to the LISTED CHEMICAL, as such exposure is defined by  
25 22 C.C.R. §12601.

26 38. Based on information and good faith belief, plaintiff alleges that at all times relevant  
27 to this action, DEFENDANTS had knowledge that individuals' normal and reasonably foreseeable  
28 use of the PRODUCTS would cause an exposure to the LISTED CHEMICAL.

1           39.     At all times relevant to this action, DEFENDANTS, and each of them, intended that  
2 such exposures to the LISTED CHEMICAL from the reasonably foreseeable use of the  
3 PRODUCTS would occur by their deliberate, non-accidental participation in the manufacture,  
4 distribution and/or sale of PRODUCTS to individuals in the State of California.

5           40.     At all times relevant to this action, DEFENDANTS failed to provide a “clear and  
6 reasonable warning” of reproductive toxicity (as defined by 22 C.C.R. §12601) to those consumers  
7 or other individuals in the State of California who were or could become exposed to the  
8 PRODUCTS and the LISTED CHEMICAL contained therein.

9           41.     Contrary to the express policy and statutory prohibition of Proposition 65, enacted  
10 directly by California voters, individuals thus exposed to the LISTED CHEMICAL from the  
11 PRODUCTS, without “clear and reasonable warning”, have suffered and continue to suffer  
12 irreparable harm, for which harm they have no plain, speedy or adequate remedy at law.

13           42.     As a consequence of the above-described acts, DEFENDANTS, and each of them,  
14 are liable, pursuant to Health & Safety Code §25249.7(b), for a maximum civil penalty of \$2,500  
15 per day for each violation.

16           43.     As a consequence of the above-described acts, Health & Safety Code §25249.7 also  
17 specifically authorizes the grant of injunctive relief under Proposition 65 against DEFENDANTS.

18                     Wherefore, plaintiff prays judgment against DEFENDANTS, and each of them, as  
19 set forth hereafter.

20  
21                                     **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

22                     Wherefore, plaintiff prays for judgment against DEFENDANTS as follows:

23           1.     That the Court, pursuant to Health & Safety Code §25249.7(b), assess civil penalties  
24 against DEFENDANTS, and each of them, in the amount of \$2,500 per day for each violation  
25 alleged herein;

26           2.     That the Court, pursuant to Health & Safety Code §25249.7(a), preliminarily and  
27 permanently enjoin DEFENDANTS, and each of them, from offering the PRODUCTS for sale or  
28 use in California, without providing an identification of the LISTED CHEMICAL in the

1 PRODUCTS as well as "clear and reasonable warning[s]" as defined by 22 CCR §12601, as  
2 plaintiff shall specify in further application to the Court;

3 3. That the Court grant plaintiff his reasonable attorney's fees and costs of suit; and

4 4. That the Court grant such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

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6 Dated: September 14, 2005

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8 Respectfully Submitted,  
9 PARAS LAW GROUP



10 Daniel M. Bornstein  
11 Attorneys for Plaintiff  
12 RUSSELL BRIMER  
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