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CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE SET

JUL 07 2006 - 9 00 AM

DEPARTMENT 212

ENDORSED
FILED
San Francisco County Superior Court

FEB - 1 2006

GORDON PARK-LI, Clerk
BY: PARAM NATT
Deputy Clerk

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

12 RUSSELL BRIMER,)
13)
14 Plaintiff,)
15 v.)
16 ANNA'S LINENS, INC.; and DOES 1 through)
17 150,)
18 Defendants.)
19 _____)

No. CGC · 06 449060

**COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL
PENALTIES AND INJUNCTIVE
RELIEF**

Health & Safety Code §25249

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

22 **NATURE OF THE ACTION**

23 1. This Complaint is a representative action brought by plaintiff RUSSELL BRIMER,
24 on behalf of citizens of the State of California, to enforce each citizen's right to be informed of the
25 presence of and nature of toxic chemicals in consumer goods.

26 2. This Complaint seeks to remedy defendants' continuing failures to warn the citizens
27 of the State of California about the presence of, the nature of and such citizens' actual and potential

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COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

1 exposure to lead present in or on consumer products placed into the stream of commerce by
2 defendants.

3 3. Lead is a chemical that is identified within 22 C.C.R. §12000 and that is known to
4 the State of California to cause cancer and birth defects (and other reproductive harm). Lead shall
5 hereafter be referred to as "LISTED CHEMICALS".

6 4. The consumer products containing the LISTED CHEMICALS, and for which
7 defendants are responsible, are plates and other ceramic containers intended for the consumption of
8 food or beverages with colored artwork or designs (containing lead) on the exterior including, but
9 not limited to, *20Pc Dinner Set/chef, Item # OS-10147 (#7 85183 10147 7)*. All such consumer
10 products containing the LISTED CHEMICALS shall hereafter be referred to as the
11 "PRODUCTS".

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

17 6. Beginning on February 27, 1987, the State had listed lead as a chemical known to
18 cause birth defects and other reproductive harm. This chemical became subject to the warning
19 requirement one year later and was therefore subject to the "clear and reasonable warning"
20 requirements of Proposition 65, beginning on February 27, 1988. (22 Code of Regulations
21 §12000(b)(c); Health and Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*)

22 7. Defendants' failure to provide proper mandatory warnings about exposure to the
23 LISTED CHEMICALS in conjunction with the sale of the PRODUCTS is a violation of
24 Proposition 65 and subjects defendants to enjoinder of such conduct as well as civil penalties for
25 each such violation.

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28 ¹ Unless specifically noted, all statutory citations refer to California law.

1 8. For defendants' violations of Proposition 65, plaintiff seeks preliminary and
2 permanent injunctive relief to compel defendants to provide users of the PRODUCTS with the
3 appropriate Proposition 65 warning regarding the hazards of such LISTED CHEMICALS.

4 9. Plaintiff also seeks civil penalties against defendants for their violations of
5 Proposition 65, as provided for by Health & Safety Code §25249.7(b).

6 PARTIES

7 10. Plaintiff RUSSELL BRIMER is a citizen of the State of California who resides in
8 the County of ALAMEDA and who is dedicated to protecting the health of California citizens,
9 including the elimination or reduction of toxic exposures, and who brings this action on behalf of
10 the general public pursuant to Health & Safety Code §25249.7.

11 11. Defendant ANNA'S LINENS, INC. ("ANNA'S LINENS") is a person doing
12 business within the meaning of Health & Safety Code §25249.11.

13 12. ANNA'S LINENS distributes and/or offers the PRODUCTS for sale or use in the
14 State of California or implies by its conduct that it distributes and/or offers the PRODUCTS for
15 sale or use in State of California.

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

18 14. MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS engage in the process of research, testing,
19 designing, assembling, fabricating and/or manufacturing, or imply by their conduct that they
20 engage in the process of research, testing, designing, assembling, fabricating and/or manufacturing,
21 one or more of the PRODUCTS in the State of California or for consumption or use in the State of
22 California.

23 15. DOES 51-100 (hereafter "DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS") are each persons
24 doing business within the meaning of Health & Safety Code §25249.11.

25 16. DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS distribute, exchange, transfer, process and/or
26 transport one or more of the PRODUCTS to individuals, businesses or retailers in the State of
27 California.

28 17. DOES 101-150 (hereafter "RETAIL DEFENDANTS") are each persons doing

1 business within the meaning of Health & Safety Code §25249.

2 18. RETAIL DEFENDANTS offer one or more of the PRODUCTS for sale to
3 individuals in the State of California.

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

9 20. ANNA'S LINENS, MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS, DISTRIBUTOR
10 DEFENDANTS and RETAIL DEFENDANTS shall, where appropriate, collectively be referred to
11 hereafter as "DEFENDANTS".

12 **VENUE AND JURISDICTION**

13 21. Venue is proper in the San Francisco Superior Court, pursuant to Code of Civil
14 Procedure §§394, 395, 395.5 because this Court is a court of competent jurisdiction, because one
15 or more instances of wrongful conduct occurred, and continues to occur, in the County of San
16 Francisco and/or because DEFENDANTS conducted, and continue to conduct, business in this
17 County.

18 22. The California Superior Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to
19 California Constitution Article VI, Section 10, which grants the Superior Court "original
20 jurisdiction in all causes except those given by statute to other trial courts." The statute under
21 which this action is brought does not specify any other basis of jurisdiction.

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

1 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

2 **(Violation of Proposition 65)**

3 24. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference, as if specifically set forth herein,
4 Paragraphs 1 through 23, inclusive.

5 25. The citizens of the State of California have expressly stated in the Safe Drinking
6 Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, Health & Safety Code §25249.5, et seq. ("Proposition
7 65") that they must be informed "about exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects and
8 other reproductive harm." (Proposition 65, §1(b).)

9 26. Proposition 65 further states that, "No person in the course of doing business shall
10 knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the state to cause cancer
11 or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable warning to such individual...."

12 27. Based on information and good faith belief, plaintiff alleges that, at all times
13 relevant to this Complaint, DEFENDANTS have engaged in the sales of these PRODUCTS in
14 violation Health & Safety Code §25249.6, et seq., and that DEFENDANTS' offensive sale of these
15 PRODUCTS continues to occur beyond DEFENDANTS' receipt of plaintiff's 60-Day Notice of
16 Violation. Plaintiff also alleges and believes that such violations will continue to occur into the
17 future.

18 28. Beginning on November 23, 2005, "60-Day Notices" of Proposition 65 violations
19 containing a Certificate of Merit pursuant to California Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(d)(1)
20 were provided to public enforcement agencies and to ANNA'S LINENS stating that exposures to
21 the LISTED CHEMICALS were occurring in the State of California from the reasonably
22 foreseeable uses of the PRODUCTS, without the individual purchasers and users first having been
23 provided with a "clear and reasonable warning" regarding such exposure.

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

27 30. At all times relevant to this action, the PRODUCTS contained the LISTED
28 CHEMICALS.

1 31. At all times relevant to this action, the DEFENDANTS knew or should have known
2 that the PRODUCTS contained the LISTED CHEMICALS.

3 32. At all times relevant to this action, the LISTED CHEMICALS were present in or on
4 the PRODUCTS in such a way as to be available for transfer or release from PRODUCTS to
5 individuals during the reasonably foreseeable use of PRODUCTS.

6 33. The normal and reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS has caused and
7 continues to cause an exposure to the LISTED CHEMICALS, as such exposure is defined by
8 22 C.C.R. §12601.

9 34. Based on information and good faith belief, plaintiff alleges, that at all times
10 relevant to this action, DEFENDANTS had knowledge that individuals' normal and reasonably
11 foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS would cause an exposure to the LISTED CHEMICALS.

12 35. At all times relevant to this action, DEFENDANTS, and each of them, intended that
13 such exposures to the LISTED CHEMICALS from the reasonably foreseeable use of the
14 PRODUCTS would occur by their deliberate, non-accidental participation in the manufacture,
15 distribution and/or sale of PRODUCTS to individuals.

16 36. At all times relevant to this action, DEFENDANTS failed to provide a "clear and
17 reasonable warning" of reproductive toxicity and carcinogenicity (as defined by 22 C.C.R. §12601)
18 to those consumers or other individuals in the State of California who were or could become
19 exposed to the PRODUCTS and the LISTED CHEMICALS contained therein.

20 37. Contrary to the express policy and statutory prohibition of Proposition 65, enacted
21 directly by California voters, individuals thus exposed to the LISTED CHEMICALS from the
22 PRODUCTS, without "clear and reasonable warning", have suffered and continue to suffer
23 irreparable harm, for which harm they have no plain, speedy or adequate remedy at law.

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

27 39. As a consequence of the above-described acts, Health & Safety Code §25249.7 also
28 specifically authorizes the grant of injunctive relief under Proposition 65.

1 Wherefore, plaintiff prays judgment against DEFENDANTS as set forth hereafter.

2 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

3 Wherefore, plaintiff prays for judgment against defendants as follows:

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

7 2. That the Court, pursuant to Health & Safety Code §25249.7(a), preliminarily and
8 permanently enjoin DEFENDANTS from offering the PRODUCTS for sale or use in California,
9 without providing an identification of the LISTED CHEMICALS in the PRODUCTS as well as
10 "clear and reasonable warning[s]" as defined by 22 CCR §12601, as plaintiff shall specify in
11 further application to the Court;

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

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

14 Dated: January 27, 2006

Respectfully Submitted,

HIRST & CHANLER, L.L.P.

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19 Christopher M. Martin
20 Attorneys for Plaintiff
21 RUSSELL BRIMER
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