

1 Clifford A. Chanler, State Bar No. 135534  
2 Josh Voorhees, State Bar No. 241436  
3 THE CHANLER GROUP  
4 2560 Ninth Street  
5 Parker Plaza, Suite 214  
6 Berkeley, CA 94710-2565  
7 Telephone: (510) 848-8880  
8 Facsimile: (510) 848-8118

9 Attorneys for Plaintiff  
10 ANTHONY E. HELD, PH.D., P.E.

**FILED**

**FEB 17 2011**

KIM TURNER, Court Executive Officer  
MARIN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT

*By: D. Taylor Deputy*

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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
FOR THE COUNTY OF MARIN  
UNLIMITED CIVIL JURISDICTION

ANTHONY E. HELD, PH.D., P.E.,

Plaintiff,

v.

BCBG MAX AZRIA GROUP, INC.; and  
DOES 1-150, inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No. CIV1100909

**COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES  
AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**

*(Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.6 et seq.)*

**NATURE OF THE ACTION**

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2           1.     This Complaint is a representative action brought by plaintiff ANTHONY E.  
3 HELD, PH.D., P.E., in the public interest of the citizens of the State of California, to enforce the  
4 People’s right to be informed of the presence of di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate (“DEHP”), a toxic  
5 chemical found in women’s shoes sold in California.

6           2.     By this Complaint, plaintiff seeks to remedy Defendant’s continuing failure to  
7 warn California citizens about their exposure to DEHP, present in or on certain women’s shoes  
8 that Defendant manufactures, imports, distributes, and/or offer for sale to consumers throughout  
9 the State of California.

10          3.     Under California’s Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986,  
11 California Health & Safety Code § 25249.6 *et seq.* (“Proposition 65”), “No person in the course  
12 of doing business shall knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known  
13 to the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable  
14 warning to such individual....” (*Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.6.*)

15          4.     On October 23, 2003, California identified and listed DEHP as a chemical known  
16 to cause birth defects and other reproductive harm. DEHP became subject to the warning  
17 requirement one year later and was, therefore, subject to the “clear and reasonable warning”  
18 requirements of Proposition 65, beginning on October 23, 2004. (*27 CCR § 27001 (c); Cal.*  
19 *Health & Safety Code § 25249.8.*)

20          5.     Defendant BCBG MAX AZRIA GROUP, INC. (“BCBG” or “Defendant”)  
21 manufactures, imports, distributes, and/or sells women’s shoes containing DEHP including, but  
22 not limited to, *Max Rave Jelly Sandals, Pink, #TMF61808 (#6 49225 36805 4).*

23          6.     All such women’s shoes containing DEHP, shall hereinafter be collectively  
24 referred to as the “PRODUCTS.”

25          7.     Defendant’s failure to warn consumers and/or other individuals in the State of  
26 California not covered by California’s Occupational Safety Health Act, Labor Code § 6300 *et*  
27 *seq.* about their exposure to DEHP in conjunction with Defendant’s distribution, importation,  
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1 manufacturing, and/or sale of the PRODUCTS is a violation of Proposition 65 and subjects  
2 Defendant to enjoinder of such conduct as well as civil penalties for each such violation.

3 8. For Defendant's violation of Proposition 65, plaintiff seeks preliminary injunctive  
4 and permanent injunctive relief to compel Defendant to provide purchasers or users of the  
5 PRODUCTS with the required warning regarding the health hazards of DEHP. (*Cal. Health &*  
6 *Safety Code § 25249.7(a).*)

7 9. Plaintiff also seeks civil penalties against Defendant for their violations of  
8 Proposition 65, as provided for by California Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(b).

9 **PARTIES**

10 10. ANTHONY E. HELD, PH.D., P.E. is a citizen of the State of California who is  
11 dedicated to protecting the health of California citizens through the elimination or reduction of  
12 toxic exposures from consumer and commercial products, and brings this action in the public  
13 interest pursuant to California Health & Safety Code § 25249.7.

14 11. BCBG is a person doing business within the meaning of California Health &  
15 Safety Code § 25249.11.

16 12. BCBG manufactures, imports, distributes, and/or offer the PRODUCTS for sale or  
17 use in the State of California or implies by its conduct that it manufactures, imports, distributes,  
18 and/or offers the PRODUCTS for sale or use in the State of California.

19 13. Defendants DOES 1-50 ("MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS") are each persons  
20 doing business within the meaning of California Health & Safety Code § 25249.11.

21 14. MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS engage in the process of research, testing,  
22 designing, assembling, fabricating, and/or manufacturing, or imply by their conduct that they  
23 engage in the process of research, testing, designing, assembling, fabricating, and/or  
24 manufacturing, e.g., by engaging in private labeling one or more of the PRODUCTS for sale or  
25 use in the State of California.

26 15. Defendants DOES 51-100 ("DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS") are each persons  
27 doing business within the meaning of California Health & Safety Code § 25249.11.



1 association that either are citizens of the State of California, have sufficient minimum contacts in  
2 the State of California, or otherwise purposefully avail themselves of the California market.  
3 DEFENDANTS' purposeful availment renders the exercise of personal jurisdiction by California  
4 courts consistent with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

5 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

6 **(Violation of Proposition 65 - Against All Defendants)**

7 24. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth herein,  
8 Paragraphs 1 through 23, inclusive.

9 25. The citizens of the State of California have expressly stated in Proposition 65 that  
10 they must be informed "about exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects and other  
11 reproductive harm." (*Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.6.*)

12 26. Proposition 65 states, "[n]o person in the course of doing business shall knowingly  
13 and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the state to cause cancer or  
14 reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable warning to such individual..."  
15 (*Id.*)

16 27. On March 19, 2010, a sixty-day notice of violation, together with the requisite  
17 Certificate of Merit, was provided to BCBG and various public enforcement agencies stating that  
18 as a result of BCBG's sales of the PRODUCTS, purchasers and users in the State of California  
19 were being exposed to DEHP resulting from the reasonably foreseeable uses of the PRODUCTS,  
20 without the individual purchasers and users first having been provided with a "clear and  
21 reasonable warning" regarding such toxic exposures.

22 28. DEFENDANTS have engaged in the manufacture, importation, distribution, and/or  
23 offering of the PRODUCTS for sale or use in violation of California Health & Safety Code §  
24 25249.6 and DEFENDANTS' manufacture, importation, distribution, and/or offering of the  
25 PRODUCTS for sale or use in violation of California Health & Safety Code § 25249.6 has  
26 continued to occur beyond BCBG's receipt of plaintiff's sixty-day notice of violation.  
27 Plaintiff further alleges and believes that such violations will continue to occur into the future.  
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1           29. After receipt of the claims asserted in the March 19, 2010 sixty-day notice of  
2 violation, the appropriate public enforcement agencies have failed to commence and diligently  
3 prosecute a cause of action against DEFENDANTS under Proposition 65.

4           30. The PRODUCTS manufactured, imported, distributed, and/or offered for sale or  
5 use in California by DEFENDANTS contained DEHP above the allowable state limits.

6           31. DEFENDANTS knew or should have known that the PRODUCTS manufactured,  
7 imported, distributed, and/or offered for sale or use by DEFENDANTS in California contained  
8 DEHP.

9           32. DEHP was present in or on the PRODUCTS in such a way as to expose  
10 individuals to DEHP through dermal contact and/or ingestion during the reasonably foreseeable  
11 use of the PRODUCTS.

12           33. The normal and reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS has caused and  
13 continues to cause consumer and workplace exposures to DEHP, as such exposure is defined by  
14 27 California Code of Regulations (“CCR”) § 25602(b).

15           34. DEFENDANTS had knowledge that the normal and reasonably foreseeable use of  
16 the PRODUCTS would expose individuals to DEHP through dermal contact and/or ingestion.

17           35. DEFENDANTS intended that such exposures to DEHP from the reasonably  
18 foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS would occur by their deliberate, non-accidental participation  
19 in the manufacture, importation, distribution, and/or offer for sale or use of PRODUCTS to  
20 individuals in the State of California.

21           36. DEFENDANTS failed to provide a “clear and reasonable warning” to those  
22 consumers and/or other individuals in the State of California who were or who could become  
23 exposed to DEHP through dermal contact and/or ingestion during the reasonably foreseeable use  
24 of the PRODUCTS.

25           37. Contrary to the express policy and statutory prohibition of Proposition 65, enacted  
26 directly by California voters, individuals exposed to DEHP through dermal contact and/or  
27 ingestion, resulting from the reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS, sold by  
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1 DEFENDANTS without a “clear and reasonable warning,” have suffered, and continue to suffer,  
2 irreparable harm, for which harm they have no plain, speedy, or adequate remedy at law.

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

6 39. As a consequence of the above-described acts, California Health & Safety Code  
7 § 25249.7(a) also specifically authorizes the Court to grant injunctive relief against  
8 DEFENDANTS.

9 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

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

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

14 2. That the Court, pursuant to California Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(a),  
15 preliminarily and permanently enjoin DEFENDANTS from manufacturing, distributing, or  
16 offering the PRODUCTS for sale or use in California, without providing “clear and reasonable  
17 warnings” as defined by 27 CCR § 25601, as to the harms associated with exposures to DEHP;

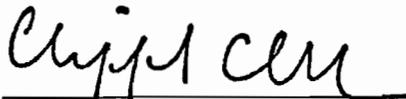
18 3. That the Court grant plaintiff his reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs of suit; and

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

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21 Dated: February 16, 2011

22 Respectfully Submitted,

23 THE CHANLER GROUP

24  
25 By: 

26 Clifford A. Chanler  
27 Attorneys for Plaintiff  
28 ANTHONY E. HELD, PH.D., P.E.