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ENDORSED
FILED
ALAMEDA COUNTY

DEC 11 2012

CLERK OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
By MARGARET J. DOWNIE
Deputy

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8 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
9 COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
10 UNLIMITED CIVIL JURISDICTION

11
12 PETER ENGLANDER,

13 Plaintiff,

14 v.

15
16 VAUGHAN & BUSHNELL MANUFACTURING
COMPANY; and DOES 1-150, inclusive,

17 Defendants.
18

Case No. RG12659338

**COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES
AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**

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

1 NATURE OF THE ACTION

2 1. This Complaint is a representative action brought by plaintiff PETER
3 ENGLANDER 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 hand tool grips sold in California.

6 2. By this Complaint, plaintiff seeks to remedy defendants’ continuing failure to
7 warn California citizens about the risk of exposure to DEHP present in and on the hand tool
8 grips manufactured, distributed, and offered for sale or use to consumers throughout the State of
9 California.

10 3. Detectable levels of DEHP are commonly found in and on the hand tool grips that
11 defendants manufacture, distribute, and offer for sale to consumers throughout the State of
12 California.

13 4. Under the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, codified at
14 Health and Safety Code section 25249.6 *et seq.* (“Proposition 65”), “[n]o person in the course of
15 doing business shall knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to
16 the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable
17 warning to such individual” Health & Safety Code § 25249.6.

18 5. Pursuant to Proposition 65, on October 24, 2003, California identified and listed
19 DEHP as a chemical known to cause birth defects and other reproductive harm. DEHP became
20 subject to the “clear and reasonable warning” requirements of the act one year later on October
21 24, 2004. Cal. Code Regs. tit. 27, § 27001(c); Health & Safety Code §§ 25249.8 &
22 25249.10(b). DEHP is referred to hereinafter as the “LISTED CHEMICAL.”

23 6. Defendants manufacture, distribute, import, sell, and/or offer for sale hand tool
24 grips containing DEHP without a warning, including, but not limited to, the *V5 19 oz. A/S*
25 *Vaughan M/F Hammer (#0 51218 13030 0)*. All such hand tool grips containing DEHP are
26 referred to collectively hereinafter as “PRODUCTS.”

1 DEFENDANTS conducted, and continue to conduct, business in this county with respect to the
2 PRODUCTS.

3 22. The California Superior Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to
4 California Constitution Article VI, section 10, which grants the Superior Court “original
5 jurisdiction in all causes except those given by statute to other trial courts.” The statute under
6 which this action is brought does not specify any other basis of subject matter jurisdiction.

7 23. The California Superior Court has jurisdiction over DEFENDANTS based on
8 plaintiff’s information and good faith belief that each defendant is a person, firm, corporation or
9 association that is a citizen of the State of California, has sufficient minimum contacts in the
10 State of California, and/or otherwise purposefully avails itself of the California market.
11 DEFENDANTS’ purposeful availment renders the exercise of personal jurisdiction by
12 California courts consistent with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

13 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

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

15 24. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth herein,
16 Paragraphs 1 through 23, inclusive.

17 25. In enacting Proposition 65, in the preamble to the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic
18 Enforcement Act of 1986, the People of California expressly declared their right “[t]o be
19 informed about exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive
20 harm.”

21 26. Proposition 65 states, “[n]o person in the course of doing business shall
22 knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the state to cause
23 cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable warning to such
24 individual” Health & Safety Code § 25249.6.

25 27. On July 11, 2012, plaintiff’s sixty-day notice of violation, together with the
26 requisite certificate of merit, was provided to VAUGHAN & BUSHNELL and certain public
27 enforcement agencies stating that, as a result of DEFENDANTS’ sales of the PRODUCTS
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1 containing the LISTED CHEMICAL, purchasers and users in the State of California were being
2 exposed to the LISTED CHEMICAL resulting from their reasonably foreseeable use of the
3 PRODUCTS, without the individual purchasers and users first having been provided with a
4 “clear and reasonable warning” regarding such toxic exposures, as required by Proposition 65.

5 28. DEFENDANTS have engaged in the manufacture, importation, distribution, sale,
6 and offering of the PRODUCTS for sale or use in violation of Health and Safety Code section
7 25249.6, and DEFENDANTS’ violations have continued to occur beyond their receipt of
8 plaintiff’s sixty-day notice of violation. As such, DEFENDANTS’ violations are ongoing and
9 continuous in nature, and will continue to occur in the future.

10 29. After receiving plaintiff’s sixty-day notice of violation, the appropriate public
11 enforcement agencies have failed to commence and diligently prosecute a cause of action
12 against DEFENDANTS under Proposition 65.

13 30. The PRODUCTS manufactured, imported, distributed, sold, and offered for sale
14 or use in California by DEFENDANTS contain the LISTED CHEMICAL such that they require
15 a “clear and reasonable” warning under Proposition 65.

16 31. DEFENDANTS knew or should have known that the PRODUCTS they
17 manufacture, import, distribute, sell, and offer for sale or use in California contain the LISTED
18 CHEMICAL.

19 32. The LISTED CHEMICAL is present in or on the PRODUCTS in such a way as to
20 expose individuals to the LISTED CHEMICAL through dermal contact and/or ingestion during
21 reasonably foreseeable use.

22 33. The normal and reasonably foreseeable uses of the PRODUCTS have caused, and
23 continue to cause, consumer exposures to the LISTED CHEMICAL, as such exposures are
24 defined by title 27 of the California Code of Regulations, section 25602(b).

25 34. DEFENDANTS had knowledge that the normal and reasonably foreseeable uses
26 of the PRODUCTS expose individuals to the LISTED CHEMICAL through dermal contact
27 and/or ingestion.
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1 reasonable warning” as defined by title 27 of the California Code of Regulations, section 25601
2 *et seq.*, as to the harms associated with exposures the LISTED CHEMICAL;

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

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

5 Dated: December 6, 2012

6 Respectfully Submitted,
7 THE CHANLER GROUP

8 By: 
9 Jonathan Bornstein
10 Attorneys for Plaintiff
11 PETER ENGLANDER
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