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FILED

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JAMES M. KIM, Court Executive Officer
MARIN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
By: R. Smith, Deputy

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

12 SUSAN DAVIA,

13 Plaintiff,

14 v.

15 GORDON COMPANIES, INC. and DOES 1-
16 150,

17 Defendants.

Case No. **CV 1504316**

**COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES AND
INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**

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

1 NATURE OF THE ACTION

2 1. This Complaint is a representative action brought by plaintiff SUSAN DAVIA, in
3 the public interest of the citizens of the State of California, to enforce the People’s right to be
4 informed of the presence of Lead, a toxic chemical found in certain AC- powered holiday
5 decorations manufactured, distributed and/or otherwise sold by defendants in California.

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

11 3. On February 27, 1987, the State listed Lead as a chemical known to cause birth
12 defects and other reproductive harm. Lead became subject to the warning requirement one year
13 later and was therefore subject to the “clear and reasonable warning” requirements of
14 Proposition 65, beginning on February 27, 1988. (*27 CCR § 27001(c); Cal. Health & Safety Code*
15 *§ 25249.8.*)

16 4. Lead shall hereinafter be referred to as the “LISTED CHEMICAL.”

17 5. Significant levels of each LISTED CHEMICAL have been discovered in or on the
18 power cords of AC-powered Holiday decorations that defendants manufacture, distribute,
19 and/or offer for sale to consumers throughout the State of California including, but not limited
20 to, 50 Light PVC Window Sculpture (#017816428416). All such AC-powered Holiday
21 decorations comprised of power cords containing the LISTED CHEMICAL shall hereinafter be
22 referred to as the “PRODUCTS.”

23 6. Defendants’ failure to warn consumers and/or other individuals in the State of
24 California about their exposures to the LISTED CHEMICAL in conjunction with defendants’
25 sale of the PRODUCTS is a violation of Proposition 65.

26 7. For defendants’ violations of Proposition 65, plaintiff seeks preliminary and
27 permanent injunctive relief to compel defendants to provide purchasers or users of the
28

1 PRODUCTS with the required warning regarding the health hazards of the LISTED
2 CHEMICAL. (*Cal. Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(a).*)

3 8. Plaintiff also seeks civil penalties against defendants for their violations of
4 Proposition 65, as provided for by California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.7(b).

5 **PARTIES**

6 9. Plaintiff SUSAN DAVIA is a citizen of the State of California who is dedicated to
7 protecting the health of California citizens through the elimination or reduction of toxic
8 exposures from consumer products, and brings this action in the public interest pursuant to
9 California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.7.

10 10. Based upon publicly available information, plaintiff is informed and believes, and
11 thereupon alleges, that defendant GORDON COMPANIES, INC. is a person doing business
12 within the meaning of California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.11.

13 11. Based upon publicly available information, plaintiff is informed and believes, and
14 thereupon alleges, that defendant GORDON COMPANIES, INC. is legally responsible for the
15 manufacture, distribution, and/or offer of the PRODUCTS for sale or use in the State of
16 California or implies by its conduct that it manufactures, distributes, and/or offers the
17 PRODUCTS for sale or use in the State of California.

18 12. Defendants DOES 1-50 (“MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS”) are each persons
19 doing business within the meaning of California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.11.

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

24 14. Defendants DOES 51-100 (“DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS”) are each persons
25 doing business within the meaning of California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.11.

26 15. DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS distribute, exchange, transfer, process and/or
27 transport one or more of the PRODUCTS to individuals, businesses or retailers for sale or use in
28 the State of California.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION
(Violation of Proposition 65 - Against All Defendants)

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

5 24. In passing Proposition 65, the citizens of the State of California expressed their
6 intent through the preamble to the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 that
7 they must be “informed about exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects, or other
8 reproductive harm.”

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

13 26. On September 2, 2015, a valid and compliant Proposition 65 sixty-day notice of
14 violation (“60-Day Notice”), together with a valid requisite Certificate of Merit, was provided to
15 GORDON COMPANIES, INC. and various public enforcement agencies stating that as a result
16 of the DEFENDANTS’ manufacture, distribution and sales of the PRODUCTS, purchasers and
17 users in the State of California are being exposed to LISTED CHEMICAL resulting from the
18 reasonably foreseeable uses of the PRODUCTS, without the individual purchasers and users
19 first having been provided with a “clear and reasonable warning” regarding such toxic
20 exposures.

21 27. DEFENDANTS have engaged in the manufacture, distribution, and/or offering of
22 the PRODUCTS for sale or use in violation of California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.6
23 and plaintiff is informed and believes that DEFENDANTS’ manufacture, distribution, and/or
24 offering of the PRODUCTS for sale or use in violation of California Health & Safety Code
25 Section 25249.6 has continued to occur beyond DEFENDANTS’ receipt of plaintiff’s 60-Day
26 Notice. Plaintiff further alleges and believes that such violations will continue to occur into the
27 future.

1 28. After receipt of the claims asserted in the 60-Day Notice, the appropriate public
2 enforcement agencies have failed to commence and diligently prosecute a cause of action
3 against DEFENDANTS under Proposition 65.

4 29. The PRODUCTS manufactured, distributed, and/or offered for sale or use in
5 California by DEFENDANTS, contain the LISTED CHEMICAL.

6 30. DEFENDANTS knew or should have known that the PRODUCTS contained the
7 LISTED CHEMICAL.

8 31. The LISTED CHEMICAL is present in or on the PRODUCTS in such a way as to
9 expose individuals to the LISTED CHEMICAL, as such exposure is defined by 27 CCR Section
10 25602(b), through dermal contact and/or ingestion and/or inhalation during or as a
11 consequence of the reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS.

12 32. DEFENDANTS knew or should have known that the reasonably foreseeable use
13 of the PRODUCTS exposes individuals to the LISTED CHEMICAL through dermal contact
14 and/or ingestion and/or inhalation.

15 33. DEFENDANTS' participation in the manufacture, distribution and/or offer for
16 sale or use of PRODUCTS to individuals in the State of California was deliberate and non-
17 accidental.

18 34. DEFENDANTS failed to provide a "clear and reasonable warning" to those
19 consumers and/or other individuals in the State of California who were or who could become
20 exposed to the LISTED CHEMICAL during the reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS.

21 35. Contrary to the express policy and statutory prohibition of Proposition 65,
22 individuals exposed to the LISTED CHEMICAL through dermal contact and/or ingestion
23 and/or inhalation resulting from the reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS, sold by
24 DEFENDANTS without a "clear and reasonable warning", have suffered, and continue to
25 suffer, irreparable harm, for which harm they have no other plain, speedy or adequate remedy
26 at law.

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