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FILED

JAN 13 2016

JAMES M. KIM, Court Executive Officer
MARIN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
By: C. Lucchesi, 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 VOXX INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION,
16 VOXX ACCESSORIES CORPORATION, LG
17 SOURCING, INC., LOWE'S COMPANIES,
18 INC. and
19 DOES 1-150,

20 Defendants.

Case No.

CIV 1600146

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 the
3 public interest of the citizens of the State of California, to enforce the People's right to be informed
4 of the presence of Di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate ("DEHP"), toxic chemicals found in certain crimpers
5 with vinyl grips 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 course
8 of doing business shall knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to
9 the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable warning
10 to such individual. . . ." (*Cal. Health & Safety Code* § 25249.6.)

11 3. On October 24, 2003, the State listed Di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate as a chemical known to
12 cause birth defects and other reproductive harm. DEHP became subject to the warning
13 requirement one year later and was therefore subject to the "clear and reasonable warning"
14 requirements of Proposition 65, beginning on October 24, 2004. (27 CCR § 27001(c); *Cal. Health &*
15 *Safety Code* § 25249.8.)

16 4. DEHP shall hereinafter be referred to as the "LISTED CHEMICAL."

17 5. Significant levels of each LISTED CHEMICAL have been discovered in or on
18 vinyl/PVC components of crimpers with vinyl grips that defendants manufacture, distribute,
19 and/or offer for sale to consumers throughout the State of California including, but not limited to,
20 RCA Coax Cable Crimping Tool (#079000308843). All crimpers comprised of vinyl/PVC materials
21 containing the LISTED CHEMICAL shall hereinafter be referred to as the "PRODUCTS."

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

25 7. For defendants' violations of Proposition 65, plaintiff seeks preliminary and
26 permanent injunctive relief to compel defendants to provide employees handling the PRODUCTS
27 and purchasers or users of the PRODUCTS with the required warning regarding the health hazards
28 of the LISTED CHEMICAL. (*Cal. Health & Safety Code* § 25249.7(a).)

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

PARTIES

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

10. Based upon publicly available information, plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereupon alleges, that defendants VOXX INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION, VOXX ACCESSORIES CORPORATION, LG SOURCING, INC. and LOWE'S COMPANIES, INC. are each a person doing business within the meaning of California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.11.

11. Based upon publicly available information, plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereupon alleges, that defendants VOXX INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION, VOXX ACCESSORIES CORPORATION, LG SOURCING, INC. and LOWE'S COMPANIES, INC. are legally responsible for the manufacture, distribution, and/or offer of the PRODUCTS for sale or use in the State of California or imply by their conduct that they manufacture, distribute, and/or offer the PRODUCTS for sale or use in the State of California.

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

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

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

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

16. Defendants DOES 101-150 (“RETAIL DEFENDANTS”) are each persons doing business within the meaning of California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.11.

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

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

19. VOXX INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION, VOXX ACCESSORIES CORPORATION, LG SOURCING, INC., LOWE'S COMPANIES, INC., MANUFACTURER DEFENDANTS, DISTRIBUTOR DEFENDANTS, and RETAIL DEFENDANTS shall, where appropriate, collectively be referred to hereinafter as "DEFENDANTS".

VENUE AND JURISDICTION

20. Venue is proper in the Marin County Superior Court, pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure Sections 394, 395, and 395.5, because this Court is a court of competent jurisdiction, because one or more instances of wrongful conduct occurred, and continues to occur, in the County of Marin and/or because DEFENDANTS conducted, and continue to conduct, business in this County with respect to the PRODUCTS.

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

22. The California Superior Court has jurisdiction over DEFENDANTS based on plaintiff's information and good faith belief that each defendant is a person, firm, corporation or association that either are citizens of the State of California, have sufficient minimum contacts in the State of California, or otherwise purposefully avail themselves of the California market.

1 DEFENDANTS' purposeful availment renders the exercise of personal jurisdiction by California
2 courts consistent with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

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

5 23. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth herein,
6 Paragraphs 1 through 22, inclusive.

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

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

15 26. On October 20, 2015, a valid and compliant Proposition 65 sixty-day notice of
16 violation ("60-Day Notice"), together with a valid requisite Certificate of Merit, was provided to
17 VOXX INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION, VOXX ACCESSORIES CORPORATION, LG
18 SOURCING, INC., LOWE'S COMPANIES, INC. and various public enforcement agencies
19 stating that as a result of the DEFENDANTS' manufacture, distribution and sales of the
20 PRODUCTS, workers, purchasers and users in the State of California are being exposed to LISTED
21 CHEMICAL resulting from the reasonably foreseeable uses of the PRODUCTS, without the
22 individual workers, purchasers and users first having been provided with a "clear and reasonable
23 warning" regarding such toxic exposures.

24 27. DEFENDANTS have engaged in the manufacture, distribution, and/or offering of the
25 PRODUCTS for sale or use in violation of California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.6 and
26 plaintiff is informed and believes that DEFENDANTS' manufacture, distribution, and/or offering
27 of the PRODUCTS for sale or use in violation of California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.6
28

1 has continued to occur beyond DEFENDANTS' receipt of plaintiff's 60-Day Notice. Plaintiff further
2 alleges and believes that such violations will continue to occur into the future.

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

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

8 30. DEFENDANTS knew or should have known that the PRODUCTS contained the
9 LISTED CHEMICAL.

10 31. The LISTED CHEMICAL is present in or on the PRODUCTS in such a way as to
11 expose individuals to the LISTED CHEMICAL, as such exposure is defined by 27 CCR Section
12 25602(b), through dermal contact and/or ingestion and/or inhalation during or as a consequence of
13 the packing, shipping, unpacking, display and daily organization and movement of PRODUCTS as
14 well as the reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS.

15 32. DEFENDANTS knew or should have known that the packing, shipping, unpacking,
16 display and daily organization and movement of PRODUCTS as well as the reasonably foreseeable
17 use of the PRODUCTS exposes individuals to the LISTED CHEMICAL through dermal contact
18 and/or ingestion and/or inhalation.

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

21 34. DEFENDANTS failed to provide a "clear and reasonable warning" to those
22 employees, consumers and/or other individuals in the State of California who were or who could
23 become exposed to the LISTED CHEMICAL during the reasonably foreseeable retail receipt,
24 display and organization of PRODUCTS as well as the reasonably foreseeable use of the
25 PRODUCTS.

26 35. Contrary to the express policy and statutory prohibition of Proposition 65, employees
27 and individuals exposed to the LISTED CHEMICAL through dermal contact and/or ingestion
28 and/or inhalation resulting from the reasonably foreseeable use of the PRODUCTS, sold by

1 DEFENDANTS without a "clear and reasonable warning", have suffered, and continue to suffer,
2 irreparable harm, for which harm they have no other plain, speedy or adequate remedy at law.

3 36. 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 of Proposition 65 pursuant to California
5 Health & Safety Code Section 25249.7(b).

6 37. As a consequence of the above-described acts, California Health & Safety Code
7 Section 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, and each of them, as
11 follows:

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

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


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

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

22 Dated: January 12, 2016

Respectfully submitted,

23 SHEFFER LAW FIRM

24
25 By: 
26 Gregory M. Sheffer
27 Attorneys for Plaintiff
28 SUSAN DAVIA