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ENDORSED
FILED
ALAMEDA COUNTY

MAY 17 2017

CLERK OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
By *[Signature]*
JAMES THOMAS, Deputy

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10
11 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
12 COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

13 ANTHONY FERREIRO,

14 Plaintiff,

15 v.

16 WAXMAN CONSUMER PRODUCTS
17 GROUP, INC.,

18 Defendant.

Case No.:

RG17860579

COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES
AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

(Violation of Health & Safety Code §25249.5
et seq.)

19 Plaintiff Anthony Ferreiro ("Plaintiff"), by and through his attorneys, alleges the
20 following cause of action in the public interest of the citizens of the State of California.

21 BACKGROUND OF THE CASE

22 1. Plaintiff brings this representative action on behalf of all California citizens to
23 enforce relevant portions of Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, codified
24 at the Health and Safety Code § 25249.5 et seq ("Proposition 65"), which reads, in relevant part,
25 "[n]o person in the course of doing business shall knowingly and intentionally expose any
26 individual to a chemical known to the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without first
27 giving clear and reasonable warning to such individual ...". Health & Safety Code § 25249.6.

28 2. This complaint is a representative action brought by Plaintiff in the public interest
of the citizens of the State of California to enforce the People's right to be informed of the health

1 hazards caused by exposure to lead, a toxic chemical found in hose adapters that are
2 manufactured, sold and/or distributed in California by defendant Waxman Consumer Products
3 Group, Inc. ("Waxman" or "Defendant") in California.

4 3. Lead is a harmful chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer and
5 reproductive toxicity. On February 27, 1987, the State of California listed lead as a chemical
6 known to cause adverse developmental and reproductive effects and lead has come under the
7 purview of Proposition 65 regulations since that time. Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 27, § 27001(c);
8 Health & Safety Code §§ 25249.8 & 25249.10(b). On October 1, 1992, the state of California
9 listed lead as a chemical known to cause cancer. *Id.*

10 4. Proposition 65 requires all businesses with ten (10) or more employees that
11 operate within California or sell products therein to comply with Proposition 65 regulations.
12 Included in such regulations is the requirement that businesses must label any product containing
13 a Proposition 65-listed chemical with a "clear and reasonable" warning before "knowingly and
14 intentionally" exposing any person to it.

15 5. Proposition 65 allows for civil penalties of up to \$2,500.00 per day per violation
16 to be imposed upon defendants in a civil action for violations of Proposition 65. Health & Safety
17 Code § 25249.7(b). Proposition 65 also allows for any court of competent jurisdiction to enjoin
18 the actions of a defendant which "violate[s] or threaten[s] to violate" the statute. Health &
19 Safety Code § 25249.7.

20 6. Plaintiff alleges that Defendant produces, manufactures, distributes, imports, sells,
21 and/or offers for sale in California, without the required warning, Plumb Craft Hose Adapters,
22 UPC No. 028905741026 ("Product" or "Products"), that contain lead.

23 7. Defendant's failure to warn consumers and other individuals in California of the
24 health hazards associated with exposure to lead in conjunction with the sale, manufacture, and/or
25 distribution of the Product is a violation of Proposition 65 and subjects Defendant to the
26 injunction and civil penalties described herein.

27 8. Plaintiff seeks civil penalties against Defendant for its violations of Proposition
28 65 in accordance with Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(b).

9. Plaintiff also seeks injunctive relief, preliminarily and permanently, requiring Defendant to provide purchasers or users of the Product with the required warnings related to the dangers and health hazards associated with exposure to lead and DINP pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(a).

PARTIES

10. Plaintiff is a citizen of the State of California acting in the interest of the general public to promote awareness of exposures to toxic chemicals in products sold in California and to improve human health by reducing hazardous substances contained in such items. He brings this action in the public interest pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(d).

11. Defendant Waxman is a wholesaler and manufacturer of home improvement, hardware and plumbing products. Through its business, Waxman effectively manufactures, imports, distributes, sells, and/or offers the Products for sale or use in the State of California, or it implies by its conduct that it manufactures, imports, distributes, sells, and/or offers the Product for sale or use in the State of California.

12. Defendant Waxman is a “person” in the course of doing business within the meaning of Health & Safety Code sections 25249.6 and 25249.11.

VENUE AND JURISDICTION

13. Venue is proper in the County of Alameda because one or more of the instances of wrongful conduct occurred, and continue to occur in this county and/or because Defendant conducted, and continues to conduct, business in the County of Alameda with respect to the Product.

14. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to California Constitution Article VI, § 10, which grants the Superior Court original jurisdiction in all causes except those given by statute to other trial courts. Health and Safety Code § 25249.7 allows for the enforcement of violations of Proposition 65 in any Court of competent jurisdiction; therefore, this Court has jurisdiction over this lawsuit.

15. This Court has jurisdiction over Defendant because it is either a citizen of the State of California, has sufficient minimum contacts with the State of California, is registered

1 with the California Secretary of State as foreign corporations authorized to do business in the
2 State of California, and/or has otherwise purposefully availed itself of the California market.
3 Such purposeful availment has rendered the exercise of jurisdiction by California courts
4 consistent and permissible with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

5 SATISFACTION OF NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

6 16. On March 31, 2017, Plaintiff gave notice of alleged violation of Health and Safety
7 Code § 25249.6 (the "Notice") to Waxman concerning the exposure of California citizens to lead
8 contained in the Product without proper warning, subject to a private action to Waxman and to
9 the California Attorney General's office and the offices of the County District attorneys and City
10 Attorneys for each city with a population greater than 750,000 persons wherein the herein
11 violations allegedly occurred.

12 17. The Notice complied with all procedural requirements of Proposition 65 including
13 the attachment of a Certificate of Merit affirming that Plaintiff's counsel had consulted with at
14 least one person with relevant and appropriate expertise who reviewed relevant data regarding
15 lead exposure, and that counsel believed there was meritorious and reasonable cause for a private
16 action.

17 18. After receiving the Notice, and to Plaintiff's best information and belief, none of
18 the noticed appropriate public enforcement agencies have commenced and diligently prosecuted
19 a cause of action against Waxman under Proposition 65 to enforce the alleged violations which
20 are the subject of Plaintiff's notice of violation.

21 19. Plaintiff is commencing this action more than sixty (60) days from the date of the
22 Notice to Waxman, as required by law.

23 FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

24 **(By Plaintiff against Defendant for the Violation of Proposition 65)**

25 20. Plaintiff hereby repeats and incorporates by reference paragraphs 1 through 19 of
26 this complaint as though fully set forth herein.

27 21. Defendant has, at all times mentioned herein, acted as manufacturer, distributor,
28 and/or retailer of the Product.

1 22. The Product contains lead, a hazardous chemical found on the Proposition 65 list
2 of chemicals known to be hazardous to human health.

3 23. The Product does not comply with the Proposition 65 warning requirements.

4 24. Plaintiff, based on his best information and belief, avers that at all relevant times
5 herein, and at least since September 1, 2016, continuing until the present, that Waxman has
6 continued to knowingly and intentionally expose California users and consumers of the Product
7 to lead without providing required warnings under Proposition 65.

8 25. The exposures that are the subject of the Notice result from the purchase,
9 acquisition, handling and recommended use of the product. Consequently, the primary route of
10 exposure to these chemicals is through ingestion. The amount of lead in drinking water can be
11 elevated with higher water temperatures and if the water chemistry of the plumbing in the
12 residence is conducive to brass corrosion that will enhance lead leaching from the hose adapter.
13 If water is held static inside the plumbing line for several hours between water discharges, levels
14 of lead in the water contained within the plumbing line containing the hose adapter will continue
15 to increase. If low volumes of water are discharged from the plumbing line without allowing the
16 line to sufficiently discharge and flush the lead from the line, levels of lead can be above 15 up/l.
17 in the drinking water. If drinking water is intermittently discharged throughout the day, lead
18 buildup in the plumbing line containing the plumbing adapter and subsequent ingestion of the
19 lead containing water may occur multiple times throughout the day. As such, cumulative lead
20 levels may exceed the 0.5 up lead/day MADL for reproductive toxicity and the 15 ug lead/day
21 NSRL for carcinogenic toxicity.

22 26. Plaintiff, based on his best information and belief, avers that such exposures will
23 continue every day until clear and reasonable warnings are provided to Product purchasers and
24 users or until this known toxic chemical is removed from the Product.

25 27. Defendant has knowledge that the normal and reasonably foreseeable use of the
26 Product exposes individuals to lead, and Defendant intends that exposures to lead will occur by
27 their deliberate, non-accidental participation in the manufacture, importation, distribution, sale
28 and offering of the Product to consumers in California

28. Plaintiff has engaged in good faith efforts to resolve the herein claims prior to this Complaint.

29. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(b), as a consequence of the above described acts, Defendant is liable for a maximum civil penalty of \$2,500 per day per violation.

30. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(a), this Court is specifically authorized to grant injunctive relief in favor of Plaintiff and against Defendant.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendant and requests the following relief:

- A. That the court assess civil penalties against Defendant in the amount of \$2,500 per day for each violation in accordance with Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(b);
- B. That the court preliminarily and permanently enjoin Defendant mandating Proposition 65 compliant warnings on the Product;
- C. That the court grant Plaintiff reasonable attorney's fees and costs of suit.
- D. That the court grant any further relief as may be just and proper.

Dated: May 16, 2017

BRODSKY & SMITH, LLC

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