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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

11 ANTHONY FERREIRO,
12 Plaintiff,

13 v.

14 LAMBRO INDUSTRIES, INC.,
15 Defendant.

Case No.:

R647867320

COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES
AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

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

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

19 **BACKGROUND OF THE CASE**

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

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

1 hazards caused by exposure to Di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP), a toxic chemical found in
2 flexible hoses manufactured, sold and/or distributed in California by defendant Lambro
3 Industries, Inc. (“Lambro” or “Defendant”) in California.

4 3. DEHP is a harmful chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer. On
5 December 20, 2013, the State of California listed DEHP as a chemical known to the State to
6 cause cancer and it has come under the purview of Proposition 65 regulations since that time.
7 Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 27, § 27001(c); Health & Safety Code §§ 25249.8 & 25249.10(b). On
8 October 24, 2003, the State of California listed DEHP as a chemical known to cause
9 reproductive toxicity. *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, vinyl flexible hoses, including
22 but not limited to LAM266403 (“Product” or “Products”), that contain DEHP.

23 7. Defendant’s failure to warn consumers and other individuals in California of the
24 health hazards associated with exposure to DEHP in conjunction with the sale, manufacture,
25 and/or distribution of the Product is a violation of Proposition 65 and subjects Defendant to the
26 enjoinder 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 DEHP 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 Lambro is a leading provider of venting and duct products, including hoses. Through its business, Lambro 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 Lambro 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 April 26, 2017, Plaintiff gave notice of alleged violation of Health and Safety
7 Code § 25249.6 (the "Notice") to Lambro concerning the exposure of California citizens to
8 DEHP contained in the Product without proper warning, subject to a private action to Lambro
9 and to the California Attorney General's office and the offices of the County District attorneys
10 and City Attorneys for each city with a population greater than 750,000 persons wherein the
11 herein 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 DEHP exposure, and that counsel believed there was meritorious and reasonable cause for a
16 private 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 Lambro 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 Lambro, 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 DEHP, a hazardous chemical found on the Proposition 65
2 list 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 February 28, 2017, continuing until the present, that Lambro has
6 continued to knowingly and intentionally expose California users and consumers of the Product
7 to DEHP 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 dermal absorption. Users may potentially be exposed to
11 DEHP by dermal absorption through direct skin contact with the white plastic during installation
12 and manipulation of the vent hose. The product can be expected to emit gas phase DEHP into
13 the air over the lifetime of the product. Discharged air vented to the outside environment that
14 passes through the vent hose poses no exposure threat to the user. Should the vent hose be used
15 to vent air into an indoor environment, exposure and subsequent intake of gas phase DEHP that
16 has leached from the inside of the ducting hose into the air stream is possible. This discharged
17 air containing gas phase DEHP can also absorb DEHP to fine particulates (dust) in the indoor
18 space. This dust containing DEHP can be suspended in the air and subsequently ingested by
19 people occupying the interior space. If the vent hose is installed in a space that is accessible to
20 interior air circulation DEHP ingestion exposure is possible as the vent hose will slowly emit
21 DEHP into the air. DEHP from the white plastic can absorb to dust on the exterior of the vent
22 hose and this dust can be resuspended and subsequently ingested. Finally, while direct mouthing
23 of the product does not seem likely, some amount of exposure through ingestion can occur by
24 touching the product with subsequent touching of the user's hand to mouth.

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

28

27. Defendant has knowledge that the normal and reasonably foreseeable use of the Product exposes individuals to DEHP, and Defendant intends that exposures to DEHP will occur by their deliberate, non-accidental participation in the manufacture, importation, distribution, sale 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: July 12, 2017

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