

ATTORNEY OR PARTY WITHOUT ATTORNEY (Name, State Bar number, and address):  
Charles W. Poss (SBN 325366)  
Environmental Research Center, Inc.  
3111 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 400  
San Diego, CA 92108  
TELEPHONE NO.: 619-500-3090 FAX NO.: 706-858-0326  
ATTORNEY FOR (Name): Plaintiff Environmental Research Center, Inc.

FOR COURT USE ONLY

**ELECTRONICALLY FILED**  
Superior Court of California,  
County of Alameda  
07/02/2024 at 05:47:59 AM  
By: Danielle Harbour,  
Deputy Clerk

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF Alameda  
STREET ADDRESS: 1225 Fallon Street  
MAILING ADDRESS: 1225 Fallon Street  
CITY AND ZIP CODE: Oakland, CA 94612  
BRANCH NAME: Rene C. Davidson

CASE NAME:  
Environmental Research Center, Inc. v. Barebones Ventures, LLC et al.

**CIVIL CASE COVER SHEET**  
 **Unlimited** (Amount demanded exceeds \$25,000)  
 **Limited** (Amount demanded is \$25,000 or less)

**Complex Case Designation**  
 **Counter**  **Joinder**  
Filed with first appearance by defendant (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.402)

CASE NUMBER: 24CV081871  
JUDGE:  
DEPT:

Items 1-6 below must be completed (see instructions on page 2).

1. Check one box below for the case type that best describes this case:

**Auto Tort**

- Auto (22)
- Uninsured motorist (46)

**Other PI/PD/WD (Personal Injury/Property Damage/Wrongful Death) Tort**

- Asbestos (04)
- Product liability (24)
- Medical malpractice (45)
- Other PI/PD/WD (23)

**Non-PI/PD/WD (Other) Tort**

- Business tort/unfair business practice (07)
- Civil rights (08)
- Defamation (13)
- Fraud (16)
- Intellectual property (19)
- Professional negligence (25)
- Other non-PI/PD/WD tort (35)

**Employment**

- Wrongful termination (36)
- Other employment (15)

**Contract**

- Breach of contract/warranty (06)
- Rule 3.740 collections (09)
- Other collections (09)
- Insurance coverage (18)
- Other contract (37)

**Real Property**

- Eminent domain/Inverse condemnation (14)
- Wrongful eviction (33)
- Other real property (26)

**Unlawful Detainer**

- Commercial (31)
- Residential (32)
- Drugs (38)

**Judicial Review**

- Asset forfeiture (05)
- Petition re: arbitration award (11)
- Writ of mandate (02)
- Other judicial review (39)

**Provisionally Complex Civil Litigation (Cal. Rules of Court, rules 3.400-3.403)**

- Antitrust/Trade regulation (03)
- Construction defect (10)
- Mass tort (40)
- Securities litigation (28)
- Environmental/Toxic tort (30)
- Insurance coverage claims arising from the above listed provisionally complex case types (41)

**Enforcement of Judgment**

- Enforcement of judgment (20)

**Miscellaneous Civil Complaint**

- RICO (27)
- Other complaint (not specified above) (42)

**Miscellaneous Civil Petition**

- Partnership and corporate governance (21)
- Other petition (not specified above) (43)

2. This case  is  is not complex under rule 3.400 of the California Rules of Court. If the case is complex, mark the factors requiring exceptional judicial management:

- a.  Large number of separately represented parties
- b.  Extensive motion practice raising difficult or novel issues that will be time-consuming to resolve
- c.  Substantial amount of documentary evidence
- d.  Large number of witnesses
- e.  Coordination with related actions pending in one or more courts in other counties, states, or countries, or in a federal court
- f.  Substantial postjudgment judicial supervision

3. Remedies sought (check all that apply): a.  monetary b.  nonmonetary; declaratory or injunctive relief c.  punitive

4. Number of causes of action (specify): 2

5. This case  is  is not a class action suit.

6. If there are any known related cases, file and serve a notice of related case. (You may use form CM-015.)

Date: July 1, 2024

Charles W. Poss

(TYPE OR PRINT NAME)

  
(SIGNATURE OF PARTY OR ATTORNEY FOR PARTY)

**NOTICE**

- Plaintiff must file this cover sheet with the first paper filed in the action or proceeding (except small claims cases or cases filed under the Probate Code, Family Code, or Welfare and Institutions Code). (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.220.) Failure to file may result in sanctions.
- File this cover sheet in addition to any cover sheet required by local court rule.
- If this case is complex under rule 3.400 et seq. of the California Rules of Court, you must serve a copy of this cover sheet on all other parties to the action or proceeding.
- Unless this is a collections case under rule 3.740 or a complex case, this cover sheet will be used for statistical purposes only.

**SUMMONS**  
**(CITACION JUDICIAL)**

**NOTICE TO DEFENDANT:**  
**(AVISO AL DEMANDADO):**

BAREBONES VENTURES, LLC and DOES 1-100

**YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF:**

**(LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):**

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH CENTER, INC. a California non-profit corporation

FOR COURT USE ONLY  
(SOLO PARA USO DE LA CORTE)

**ELECTRONICALLY FILED**  
Superior Court of California  
County of Alameda

07/01/2024

Chad Finke, Executive Officer / Clerk of the Court

By:           D. Harbour           Deputy

**NOTICE!** You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.

You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp)), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site ([www.lawhelpcalifornia.org](http://www.lawhelpcalifornia.org)), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp)), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. **NOTE:** The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case. **¡AVISO!** Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación.

Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California ([www.sucorte.ca.gov](http://www.sucorte.ca.gov)), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia.

Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, ([www.lawhelpcalifornia.org](http://www.lawhelpcalifornia.org)), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, ([www.sucorte.ca.gov](http://www.sucorte.ca.gov)) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. **AVISO:** Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de \$10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.

The name and address of the court is:

(El nombre y dirección de la corte es): Alameda County Superior Court

1225 Fallon Street  
Oakland, California 94612

CASE NUMBER:  
(Número del Caso):

**24CV081871**

The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is:

(El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es):

**Charles W. Poss, ERC, Inc., 3111 Camino Del Rio North, Ste. 400, San Diego, CA 92108 (619) 500-3090**

DATE: 07/01/2024

(Fecha)

Chad Finke, Executive Officer / Clerk of the Court

Clerk, by

(Secretario)

, Deputy

(Adjunto)

(For proof of service of this summons, use Proof of Service of Summons (form POS-010).)

(Para prueba de entrega de esta citación use el formulario Proof of Service of Summons, (POS-010)).

D. Harbour

[SEAL]



**NOTICE TO THE PERSON SERVED:** You are served

1.  as an individual defendant.

2.  as the person sued under the fictitious name of (specify):

3.  on behalf of (specify):

under:  CCP 416.10 (corporation)

CCP 416.20 (defunct corporation)

CCP 416.40 (association or partnership)

other (specify):

4.  by personal delivery on (date):

CCP 416.60 (minor)

CCP 416.70 (conservatee)

CCP 416.90 (authorized person)

1 Charles W. Poss (SBN 325366)  
 2 Environmental Research Center, Inc.  
 3 3111 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 400  
 4 San Diego, CA 92108  
 5 Ph: (619) 500-3090  
 6 Email: charles.poss@erc501c3.org  
 7 Attorney for Plaintiff Environmental Research Center, Inc.

8 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**  
 9 **COUNTY OF ALAMEDA**

11 **ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH CENTER,**  
 12 **INC., a California non-profit corporation**

13 **Plaintiff,**

14 vs.

15 **BAREBONES VENTURES, LLC and DOES**  
 16 **1-100**

17 **Defendants.**

**CASE NO. 24CV081871**

**COMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE  
 AND DECLARATORY RELIEF AND  
 CIVIL PENALTIES**

[Miscellaneous Civil Complaint (42)]  
 Proposition 65, Health & Safety Code  
 Section 25249.5 et seq.]

18  
 19 Plaintiff Environmental Research Center, Inc. hereby alleges:

20 **I**

21 **INTRODUCTION**

22 1. Plaintiff Environmental Research Center, Inc. (hereinafter “Plaintiff” or “ERC”) brings  
 23 this action as a private attorney general enforcer and in the public interest pursuant to Health &  
 24 Safety Code section 25249.7, subdivision (d). The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement  
 25 Act of 1986 (Health & Safety Code section 25249.5 *et seq.*) also known as “Proposition 65,”  
 26 mandates that businesses with ten or more employees must provide a “clear and reasonable  
 27 warning” prior to exposing any individual to a chemical known to the state to cause cancer or  
 28 reproductive toxicity. Lead is a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth

1 defects, and other reproductive harm. This Complaint seeks injunctive and declaratory relief  
2 and civil penalties to remedy the ongoing failure of Defendants Barebones Ventures, LLC  
3 (“Barebones”) and Does 1-100 (hereinafter individually referred to as “Defendant” or  
4 collectively as “Defendants”), to warn consumers that they have been exposed to lead from a  
5 number of nutritional health products developed, manufactured, marketed, distributed, and/or  
6 sold by Barebones as set forth in paragraph 3 at levels exceeding the applicable Maximum  
7 Allowable Dose Level (“MADL”) and requiring a warning pursuant to Health & Safety Code  
8 section 25249.6.

## 9 II

### 10 PARTIES

11 2. Plaintiff ERC is a California non-profit corporation dedicated to, among other causes,  
12 helping safeguard the public from health hazards by reducing the use and misuse of hazardous  
13 and toxic chemicals, facilitating a safe environment for consumers and employees, and  
14 encouraging corporate responsibility.

15 3. Defendant Barebones is a business that develops, manufactures, markets, distributes,  
16 and/or sells nutritional health products that have exposed users to lead in the State of California  
17 within the relevant statute of limitations period. These “SUBJECT PRODUCTS” (as identified  
18 in the Notices of Violation dated March 1, 2024 and March 14, 2024 attached hereto as  
19 **Exhibits A and B**) are: (1) Bare Bones Plant-Based Soup "Cheesy" Broccoli, (2) Bare Bones  
20 Plant-Based Soup Buffalo Cauliflower, (3) Bare Bones Plant-Based Soup Lentil Curry, (4) Bare  
21 Bones Organic Chicken Bone Broth Low Sodium, (5) Bare Bones Organic Chicken Bone Broth,  
22 and (6) Bare Bones Grass-Fed Beef Bone Broth. Barebones Ventures, LLC is a company subject to  
23 Proposition 65 as it employs ten or more persons and has employed ten or more persons at all  
24 times relevant to this action.

25 4. Defendants Does 1-100, are named herein under fictitious names, as their true names  
26 and capacities are unknown to ERC. ERC is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that  
27 each of said Does is responsible, in some actionable manner, for the events and happenings  
28 hereinafter referred to, either through said Does’ conduct, or through the conduct of its agents,

1 servants or employees, or in some other manner, causing the harms alleged by ERC in this  
2 Complaint. When said true names and capacities of Does are ascertained, ERC will seek leave  
3 to amend this Complaint to set forth the same.

### 4 III

#### 5 JURISDICTION AND VENUE

6 5. This Court has jurisdiction pursuant to California Constitution Article VI, Section 10,  
7 which grants the Superior Court original jurisdiction in all causes except those given by statute  
8 to other trial courts. The statute under which this action is brought does not specify any other  
9 basis for jurisdiction.

10 6. This Court has jurisdiction over Barebones because Barebones has sufficient minimum  
11 contacts with California, and otherwise intentionally avails itself of the California market  
12 through the marketing, distribution, and/or sale of the SUBJECT PRODUCTS in the State of  
13 California so as to render the exercise of jurisdiction over it by the California courts consistent  
14 with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.

15 7. The Complaint is based on allegations contained in the Notices of Violation dated  
16 March 1, 2024 and March 14, 2024, served on the California Attorney General, other public  
17 enforcers, and Barebones. The Notices of Violation constitute adequate notice to Barebones  
18 because they provided adequate information to allow Barebones to assess the nature of the  
19 alleged violations, consistent with Proposition 65 and its implementing regulations. A  
20 certificate of merit and a certificate of service accompanied each copy of the Notices of  
21 Violation, and both certificates comply with Proposition 65 and its implementing regulations.  
22 The Notices of Violation served on Barebones also included a copy of “The Safe Drinking  
23 Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65): A Summary.” Service of the  
24 Notices of Violation and accompanying documents complied with Proposition 65 and its  
25 implementing regulations. Attached hereto as **Exhibits A** and **B** are true and correct copies of  
26 the Notices of Violation and associated documents. More than 60 days have passed since ERC  
27 mailed the Notices of Violation and no public enforcement entity has filed a Complaint in this  
28 case.

1 8. This Court is the proper venue for the action because the causes of action have arisen in  
2 the County of Alameda where some of the violations of law have occurred, and will continue to  
3 occur, due to Barebones' ongoing sale of the SUBJECT PRODUCTS. Furthermore, venue is  
4 proper in this Court under Code of Civil Procedure section 395.5 and Health & Safety Code  
5 section 25249.7.

#### 6 IV

#### 7 **STATUTORY BACKGROUND**

8 9. The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 is an initiative statute  
9 passed as "Proposition 65" by an overwhelming majority vote of the people in November of  
10 1986.

11 10. The warning requirement of Proposition 65 is contained in Health & Safety Code  
12 section 25249.6, which provides:

13 No person in the course of doing business shall knowingly and  
14 intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the state to  
15 cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and  
16 reasonable warning to such individual, except as provided in Section  
17 25249.10.

18 11. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment ("OEHHA"), a division of Cal  
19 EPA, is the lead agency in charge of the implementation of Proposition 65. OEHHA  
20 administers the Proposition 65 program and administers regulations that govern Proposition 65  
21 in general, including warnings to comply with the statute. The warning regulations are found at  
22 Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations, Article 6. The regulations define expose as "to  
23 cause to ingest, inhale, contact via body surfaces or otherwise come into contact with a listed  
24 chemical. An individual may come into contact with a listed chemical through water, air, food,  
25 consumer products and any other environmental exposure as well as occupational exposures."  
(Cal. Code Regs., tit. 27, § 25102, subd. (i).)

26 12. In this case, the exposures are caused by consumer products. A consumer product is  
27 defined as "any article, or component part thereof, including food, that is produced, distributed,  
28 or sold for the personal use, consumption or enjoyment of a consumer." (Cal. Code Regs., tit.

1 27, § 25600.1, subd. (d).) Food “includes ‘dietary supplements’ as defined in California Code  
2 of Regulations, title 17, section 10200.” (*Id.* at subd. (g).) A consumer product exposure is “an  
3 exposure that results from a person’s acquisition, purchase, storage, consumption, or any  
4 reasonably foreseeable use of a consumer product, including consumption of a food.” (*Id.* at  
5 subd. (e).)

6 13. On August 30, 2016, the Office of Administrative Law approved the adoption of  
7 OEHHA’s amendments to Article 6, Clear and Reasonable Warnings of the California Code of  
8 Regulations. This action repealed virtually all of the regulatory provisions of Title 27 of the  
9 California Code of Regulations, Article 6 (sections 25601 *et seq.*) and replaced the repealed  
10 sections with new regulations set forth in two new Subarticles to Article 6 that became  
11 operative on August 30, 2018 (the “New Warning Regulations”). The New Warning  
12 Regulations provide, among other things, methods of transmission and content of warnings  
13 deemed to comply with Proposition 65. Barebones is subject to the warning requirements set  
14 forth in the New Warning Regulations that became operative on August 30, 2018.

15 14. Health & Safety Code section 25249.6 provides that “No person in the course of doing  
16 business shall knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the  
17 state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving clear and reasonable warning  
18 to such individual . . . .” The New Warning Regulations apply when clear and reasonable  
19 warnings are required under Section 25249.6. Pursuant to the New Warning Regulations,  
20 consumer product warnings “must be prominently displayed on a label, labeling, or sign, and  
21 must be displayed with such conspicuousness as compared with other words, statements,  
22 designs or devices on the label, labeling, or sign, as to render the warning likely to be seen,  
23 read, and understood by an ordinary individual under customary conditions of purchase or use.”  
24 (*Id.* at § 25601, subd. (c).)

25 15. Proposition 65 establishes a procedure by which the State is to develop a list of  
26 chemicals “known to the State to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity.” (Health & Safety Code,  
27 § 25249.8.) There is no duty to provide a clear and reasonable warning until 12-months after  
28 the chemical is published on the State list. (Health & Safety Code, § 25249.10, subd. (b).)

1 16. Lead was listed as a chemical known to the State of California to cause developmental  
2 toxicity in the fetus and male and female reproductive toxicity on February 27, 1987. Lead was  
3 listed as a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer on October 1, 1992.  
4 (OEHHA Chemicals Considered or Listed Under Proposition 65 -  
5 <https://oehha.ca.gov/proposition-65/chemicals/lead-and-lead-compounds>.) The MADL for lead  
6 as a chemical known to cause reproductive toxicity is 0.5 micrograms per day. (Cal. Code  
7 Regs., tit. 27, §25805, subd. (b).) The No Significant Risk Level for lead as a carcinogen is 15  
8 micrograms per day. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 27, §25705, subd. (b).)

9 17. Proposition 65 provides that any person “violating or threatening to violate” Proposition  
10 65 may be enjoined in any court of competent jurisdiction. (Health & Safety Code, §25249.7,  
11 subd. (a).) To “threaten to violate” means “to create a condition in which there is a substantial  
12 probability that a violation will occur.” (Health & Safety Code, § 25249.11, subd. (e).)  
13 Furthermore, violators are subject to a civil penalty of up to \$2,500 per day for each violation.  
14 (Health & Safety Code, § 25249.7, subd. (b)(1).)

15 18. Proposition 65 may be enforced by any person in the public interest who provides notice  
16 sixty days before filing suit to both the violator and designated law enforcement officials. The  
17 failure of law enforcement officials to file a timely Complaint enables a citizen suit to be filed  
18 pursuant to Health & Safety Code section 25249.7, subdivisions (c) and (d).

## 19 V

### 20 **STATEMENT OF FACTS**

21 19. Barebones has developed, manufactured, marketed, distributed, and/or sold the  
22 SUBJECT PRODUCTS containing lead into the State of California. Consumption of the  
23 SUBJECT PRODUCTS according to the directions and/or recommendations provided for said  
24 products causes consumers to be exposed to lead at levels exceeding the 0.5 micrograms per day  
25 MADL and requiring a warning. Consumers have been ingesting these products for many  
26 years, without any knowledge of their exposure to this very dangerous chemical.

27 20. For many years, Barebones has knowingly and intentionally exposed numerous persons  
28 to lead without providing any type of Proposition 65 warning. Prior to ERC’s Notices of



1 Violation and this Complaint, Barebones failed to provide a warning on the labels of the  
2 SUBJECT PRODUCTS or provide any other legally acceptable warning via any other  
3 acceptable method. Barebones has, at all times relevant hereto, been aware that the SUBJECT  
4 PRODUCTS contained lead and that persons using these products have been exposed to this  
5 chemical. Barebones has been aware of the presence of lead in the SUBJECT PRODUCTS and  
6 has failed to disclose the presence of this chemical to the public, who undoubtedly believe they  
7 have been ingesting totally healthy and pure products pursuant to the company's statements.

8 21. Both prior and subsequent to ERC's Notices of Violation, Barebones failed to provide  
9 consumers of the SUBJECT PRODUCTS with a clear and reasonable warning that they have  
10 been exposed to a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects and  
11 other reproductive harm. This failure to warn is ongoing.

12 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**  
13 **(Violation of Section 25249.6 of the Health and Safety Code, Failure to Provide Clear and**  
14 **Reasonable Warning under Proposition 65)**

15 22. ERC refers to paragraphs 1-21, inclusive, and incorporates them herein by this  
16 reference.

17 23. By committing the acts alleged above, Barebones has, in the course of doing business,  
18 knowingly and intentionally exposed users of the SUBJECT PRODUCTS to lead, a chemical  
19 known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects, and other reproductive harm,  
20 without first giving clear and reasonable warning to such individuals within the meaning of  
21 Health & Safety Code section 25249.6. In doing so, Barebones has violated Health & Safety  
22 Code section 25249.6 and continues to violate the statute with each successive sale of the  
23 SUBJECT PRODUCTS.

24 24. Said violations render Barebones liable for civil penalties, up to \$2,500 per day for each  
25 violation, and subject Barebones to injunction.

26 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**  
27 **(Declaratory Relief)**

28 25. ERC refers to paragraphs 1-24, inclusive, and incorporates them herein by this

1 reference.

2 26. There exists an actual controversy relating to the legal rights and duties of the Parties,  
3 within the meaning of Code of Civil Procedure section 1060, between ERC and Barebones,  
4 concerning whether Barebones has exposed individuals to a chemical known to the State of  
5 California to cause cancer, birth defects, and other reproductive harm without providing clear  
6 and reasonable warning.

7 **VI**

8 **PRAYER**

9 WHEREFORE ERC prays for relief as follows:

10 1. On the First Cause of Action, for civil penalties for each and every violation according  
11 to proof;

12 2. On the First Cause of Action, and pursuant to Health & Safety Code section 25249.7,  
13 subdivision (a), for such temporary restraining orders, preliminary and permanent injunctive  
14 orders, or other orders as are necessary to prevent Barebones from exposing persons to lead  
15 without providing clear and reasonable warning;

16 3. On the Second Cause of Action, for a declaratory judgment pursuant to Code of Civil  
17 Procedure section 1060 declaring that Barebones has exposed individuals to lead without  
18 providing clear and reasonable warning; and

19 4. On all Causes of Action, for reasonable attorneys' fees pursuant to Code of Civil  
20 Procedure section 1021.5 or the substantial benefit theory;

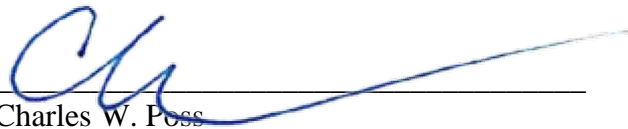
21 5. For costs of suit herein; and

22 6. For such other relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

23 ///

24 DATED: July 1, 2024

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH CENTER, INC.

25   
26 \_\_\_\_\_  
Charles W. Poss

27 In-House Counsel for Plaintiff

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# EXHIBIT A



## Environmental Research Center

3111 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 400  
San Diego, CA 92108  
619-500-3090

March 1, 2024

### NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE SECTION 25249.5 *ET SEQ.* (PROPOSITION 65)

Dear Alleged Violator and the Appropriate Public Enforcement Agencies:

I am the In-House Counsel for Environmental Research Center, Inc. (“ERC”). ERC is a California non-profit corporation dedicated to, among other causes, helping safeguard the public from health hazards by bringing about a reduction in the use and misuse of hazardous and toxic chemicals, facilitating a safe environment for consumers and employees and encouraging corporate responsibility.

ERC has identified violations of California’s Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (“Proposition 65”), which is codified at California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*, with respect to the products identified below. These violations have occurred and continue to occur because the alleged Violator identified below failed to provide required clear and reasonable warnings with these products. This letter serves as a notice of these violations to the alleged Violator and the appropriate public enforcement agencies. Pursuant to Section 25249.7(d) of the statute, ERC intends to file a private enforcement action in the public interest 60 days after effective service of this notice unless the public enforcement agencies have commenced and are diligently prosecuting an action to rectify these violations.

**General Information about Proposition 65.** A copy of a summary of Proposition 65, prepared by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, is attached with the copy of this letter served to the alleged Violator identified below.

**Alleged Violator.** The name of the company covered by this notice that violated Proposition 65 (hereinafter the “Violator”) is:

**Barebones Ventures, LLC**

**Consumer Products and Listed Chemical.** The products that is the subject of this notice and the chemical in those products identified as exceeding allowable levels are:

- 1. Bare Bones Plant-Based Soup "Cheesy" Broccoli - Lead**
- 2. Bare Bones Plant-Based Soup Buffalo Cauliflower - Lead**
- 3. Bare Bones Plant-Based Soup Lentil Curry - Lead**

On February 27, 1987, the State of California officially listed lead as a chemical known to cause

developmental toxicity, and male and female reproductive toxicity. On October 1, 1992, the State of California officially listed lead and lead compounds as chemicals known to cause cancer.

It should be noted that ERC may continue to investigate other products that may reveal further violations and result in subsequent notices of violations.


**Route of Exposure.** The consumer exposures that are the subject of this notice result from the recommended use of these products. Consequently, the route of exposure to this chemical has been and continues to be through ingestion.

**Approximate Time Period of Violations.** Ongoing violations have occurred every day since at least March 1, 2021, as well as every day since the products were introduced into the California marketplace, and will continue every day until clear and reasonable warnings are provided to product purchasers and users or until this known toxic chemical is either removed from or reduced to allowable levels in the products. Proposition 65 requires that a clear and reasonable warning be provided prior to exposure to the identified chemical. The method of warning should be a warning that appears on the product label. The Violator violated Proposition 65 because it failed to provide persons ingesting these products with appropriate warnings that they are being exposed to this chemical.

Consistent with the public interest goals of Proposition 65 and a desire to have these ongoing violations of California law quickly rectified, ERC is interested in seeking a constructive resolution of this matter that includes an enforceable written agreement by the Violator to: (1) reformulate the identified products so as to eliminate further exposures to the identified chemical, or provide appropriate warnings on the labels of these products; (2) pay an appropriate civil penalty; and (3) provide clear and reasonable warnings compliant with Proposition 65 to all persons located in California who purchased the above products in the last three years. Such a resolution will prevent further unwarned consumer exposures to the identified chemical, as well as expensive and time-consuming litigation.

Please direct all questions concerning this notice to my attention, or Chris Heptinstall, Executive Director of ERC, at the above listed address and telephone number.

Sincerely,



---

Charles Poss  
In-House Counsel  
Environmental Research Center

Attachments

- Certificate of Merit
- Certificate of Service
- OEHHA Summary (to Barebones Ventures, LLC and its Registered Agents for Service of Process only)
- Additional Supporting Information for Certificate of Merit (to AG only)

**CERTIFICATE OF MERIT**

**Re: Environmental Research Center, Inc.'s Notice of Proposition 65 Violations by Barebones Ventures, LLC**

I, Charles Poss, declare:

1. This Certificate of Merit accompanies the attached 60-day notice in which it is alleged the party identified in the notice violated California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.6 by failing to provide clear and reasonable warnings.

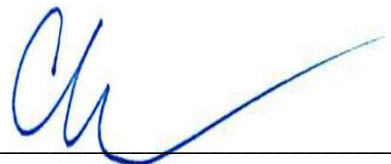
2. I am an attorney for the noticing party.

3. I have consulted with one or more persons with relevant and appropriate experience or expertise who have reviewed facts, studies, or other data regarding the exposure to the listed chemical that is the subject of the notice.

4. Based on the information obtained through those consultants, and on other information in my possession, I believe there is a reasonable and meritorious case for the private action. I understand that "reasonable and meritorious case for the private action" means that the information provides a credible basis that all elements of the plaintiff's case can be established and that the information did not prove that the alleged Violator will be able to establish any of the affirmative defenses set forth in the statute.

5. Along with the copy of this Certificate of Merit served on the Attorney General is attached additional factual information sufficient to establish the basis for this certificate, including the information identified in California Health & Safety Code §25249.7(h)(2), i.e., (1) the identity of the persons consulted with and relied on by the certifier, and (2) the facts, studies, or other data reviewed by those persons.

Dated: March 1, 2024



---

Charles Poss

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE PURSUANT TO 27 CCR § 25903**

I, the undersigned, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the following is true and correct:

I am a citizen of the United States and over the age of 18 years of age. My business address is 306 Joy Street, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia 30742. I am a resident or employed in the county where the mailing occurred. The envelope or package was placed in the mail at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

On March 1, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; “THE SAFE DRINKING WATER AND TOXIC ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1986 (PROPOSITION 65): A SUMMARY”** on the following parties by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties listed below and depositing it in a U.S. Postal Service Office with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by Certified Mail:

Current President or CEO  
Barebones Ventures, LLC  
4456 Vandever Ave, Ste 6  
San Diego, CA 92120

Corporation Service Company  
(Registered Agent for Barebones Ventures, LLC)  
251 Little Falls Dr  
Wilmington, DE 19808

Current President or CEO  
Barebones Ventures, LLC  
5065 Green Spruce Dr  
Sylvania, OH 43560

Katherine Harvey  
(Registered Agent for Barebones Ventures, LLC)  
1362 Crestwood Rd  
Toledo, OH 43612

Current President or CEO  
Barebones Ventures, LLC  
225 E Main St, Ste 204  
Medford, OR 97501

Katherine Harvey  
(Registered Agent for Barebones Ventures, LLC)  
225 E Main St, Ste 204  
Medford, OR 97501

On March 1, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF MERIT AS REQUIRED BY CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.7(d)(1)** were served on the following party when a true and correct copy thereof was uploaded on the California Attorney General’s website, which can be accessed at <https://oag.ca.gov/prop65/add-60-day-notice> :

Office of the California Attorney General  
Prop 65 Enforcement Reporting  
1515 Clay Street, Suite 2000  
Post Office Box 70550  
Oakland, CA 94612-0550

On March 1, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** were served on the following parties when a true and correct copy thereof was sent via electronic mail to each of the parties listed below:

Pamela Y. Price, District Attorney  
Alameda County  
7677 Oakport Street, Suite 650  
Oakland, CA 94621  
CEPDProp65@acgov.org

Barbara Yook, District Attorney  
Calaveras County  
891 Mountain Ranch Road  
San Andreas, CA 95249  
Prop65Env@co.calaveras.ca.us

Notice of Violations of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

March 1, 2024

Page 5

Stacey Grassini, Deputy District Attorney  
Contra Costa County  
900 Ward Street  
Martinez, CA 94553  
sgrassini@contracostada.org

James Clinchard, Assistant District Attorney  
El Dorado County  
778 Pacific Street  
Placerville, CA 95667  
EDCDAPROP65@edcda.us

Lisa A. Smittcamp, District Attorney  
Fresno County  
2100 Tulare Street  
Fresno, CA 93721  
consumerprotection@fresnocountyca.gov

Thomas L. Hardy, District Attorney  
Inyo County  
168 North Edwards Street  
Independence, CA 93526  
inyoda@inyocounty.us

Devin Chandler, Program Coordinator  
Lassen County  
2950 Riverside Dr  
Susanville, CA 96130  
dchandler@co.lassen.ca.us

Lori E. Frugoli, District Attorney  
Marin County  
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 145  
San Rafael, CA 94903  
consumer@marincounty.org

Walter W. Wall, District Attorney  
Mariposa County  
P.O. Box 730  
Mariposa, CA 95338  
mcda@mariposacounty.org

Kimberly Lewis, District Attorney  
Merced County  
550 West Main St  
Merced, CA 95340  
Prop65@countyofmerced.com

Jeannine M. Pacioni, District Attorney  
Monterey County  
1200 Aguajito Road  
Monterey, CA 93940  
Prop65DA@co.monterey.ca.us

Allison Haley, District Attorney  
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1127 First Street, Ste C  
Napa, CA 94559  
CEPD@countyofnapa.org

Clifford H. Newell, District Attorney  
Nevada County  
201 Commercial St  
Nevada City, CA 95959  
DA.Prop65@co.nevada.ca.us

Todd Spitzer, District Attorney  
Orange County  
300 N Flower St  
Santa Ana, CA 92703  
Prop65notice@ocdapa.org

Morgan Briggs Gire, District Attorney  
Placer County  
10810 Justice Center Drive  
Roseville, CA 95678  
Prop65@placer.ca.gov

David Hollister, District Attorney  
Plumas County  
520 Main St  
Quincy, CA 95971  
davidhollister@countyofplumas.com

Paul E. Zellerbach, District Attorney  
Riverside County  
3072 Orange Street  
Riverside, CA 92501  
Prop65@rivcoda.org

Anne Marie Schubert, District Attorney  
Sacramento County  
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Sacramento, CA 95814  
Prop65@sacda.org

Summer Stephan, District Attorney  
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330 West Broadway  
San Diego, CA 92101  
SanDiegoDAProp65@sdca.org

Mark Ankcorn, Deputy City Attorney  
San Diego City Attorney  
1200 Third Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92101  
CityAttyProp65@sandiego.gov



Notice of Violations of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

March 1, 2024

Page 6

Alexandra Grayner, Assistant District Attorney  
San Francisco District Attorney's Office  
350 Rhode Island Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
Alexandra.grayner@sfgov.org

Nora V. Frimann, City Attorney  
Santa Clara City Attorney  
200 E. Santa Clara Street, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Jose, CA 96113  
Proposition65notices@sanjoseca.gov

Henry Lifton, Deputy City Attorney  
San Francisco City Attorney  
1390 Market Street, 7th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
Prop65@sfcityatty.org

Jeffrey S. Rosell, District Attorney  
Santa Cruz County  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
Prop65DA@santacruzcounty.us

Tori Verber Salazar, District Attorney  
San Joaquin County  
222 E. Weber Avenue, Room 202  
Stockton, CA 95202  
DAConsumer.Environmental@sjcda.org

Jill Ravitch, District Attorney  
Sonoma County  
600 Administration Dr  
Sonoma, CA 95403  
Jeannie.Barnes@sonoma-county.org

Eric J. Dobroth, Deputy District Attorney  
San Luis Obispo County  
County Government Center Annex, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408  
edobroth@co.slo.ca.us

Phillip J. Cline, District Attorney  
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221 S Mooney Blvd  
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Prop65@co.tulare.ca.us

Christopher Dalbey, Deputy District Attorney  
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Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
DAProp65@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

Gregory D. Totten, District Attorney  
Ventura County  
800 S Victoria Ave  
Ventura, CA 93009  
daspecialops@ventura.org

Bud Porter, Supervising Deputy District Attorney  
Santa Clara County  
70 W Hedding St  
San Jose, CA 95110  
EPU@da.sccgov.org

Jeff W. Reisig, District Attorney  
Yolo County  
301 Second Street  
Woodland, CA 95695  
cfepd@yolocounty.org

On March 1, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** on each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto, and depositing it with the U.S. Postal Service with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by First Class Mail.

Executed on March 1, 2024, in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.



Phyllis Dunwoody

**Service List**

District Attorney, Alpine  
County  
P.O. Box 248  
17300 Hwy 89  
Markleeville, CA 96120

District Attorney, Amador  
County  
708 Court Street, Suite 202  
Jackson, CA 95642

District Attorney, Butte  
County  
25 County Center Drive, Suite  
245  
Oroville, CA 95965

District Attorney, Colusa  
County  
310 6<sup>th</sup> St  
Colusa, CA 95932

District Attorney, Del Norte  
County  
450 H Street, Room 171  
Crescent City, CA 95531

District Attorney, Glenn  
County  
Post Office Box 430  
Willows, CA 95988

District Attorney, Humboldt  
County  
825 5th Street 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Eureka, CA 95501

District Attorney, Imperial  
County  
940 West Main Street, Ste 102  
El Centro, CA 92243

District Attorney, Kern County  
1215 Truxtun Avenue  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

District Attorney, Kings  
County  
1400 West Lacey Boulevard  
Hanford, CA 93230

District Attorney, Lake County  
255 N. Forbes Street  
Lakeport, CA 95453

District Attorney, Los Angeles  
County  
Hall of Justice  
211 West Temple St., Ste 1200  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

District Attorney, Madera  
County  
209 West Yosemite Avenue  
Madera, CA 93637

District Attorney, Mendocino  
County  
Post Office Box 1000  
Ukiah, CA 95482

District Attorney, Modoc  
County  
204 S Court Street, Room 202  
Alturas, CA 96101-4020

District Attorney, Mono  
County  
Post Office Box 617  
Bridgeport, CA 93517

District Attorney, San Benito  
County  
419 Fourth Street, 2nd Floor  
Hollister, CA 95023

District Attorney, San  
Bernardino County  
303 West Third Street  
San Bernadino, CA 92415

District Attorney, San Mateo  
County  
400 County Ctr., 3rd Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063

District Attorney, Shasta  
County  
1355 West Street  
Redding, CA 96001

District Attorney, Sierra  
County  
Post Office Box 457  
100 Courthouse Square, 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Floor  
Downieville, CA 95936

District Attorney, Siskiyou  
County  
Post Office Box 986  
Yreka, CA 96097

District Attorney, Solano  
County  
675 Texas Street, Ste 4500  
Fairfield, CA 94533

District Attorney, Stanislaus  
County  
832 12th Street, Ste 300  
Modesto, CA 95354

District Attorney, Sutter  
County  
463 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Yuba City, CA 95991

District Attorney, Tehama  
County  
Post Office Box 519  
Red Bluff, CA 96080

District Attorney, Trinity  
County  
Post Office Box 310  
Weaverville, CA 96093

District Attorney, Tuolumne  
County  
423 N. Washington Street  
Sonora, CA 95370

District Attorney, Yuba  
County  
215 Fifth Street, Suite 152  
Marysville, CA 95901

Los Angeles City Attorney's  
Office  
City Hall East  
200 N. Main Street, Suite 800  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

## APPENDIX A

### OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARD ASSESSMENT CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

#### THE SAFE DRINKING WATER AND TOXIC ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1986 (PROPOSITION 65): A SUMMARY

The following summary has been prepared by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the lead agency for the implementation of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (commonly known as "Proposition 65"). A copy of this summary must be included as an attachment to any notice of violation served upon an alleged violator of the Act. The summary provides basic information about the provisions of the law, and is intended to serve only as a convenient source of general information. It is not intended to provide authoritative guidance on the meaning or application of the law. The reader is directed to the statute and OEHHA implementing regulations (see citations below) for further information.

FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING THE BASIS FOR THE ALLEGATIONS IN THE NOTICE RELATED TO YOUR BUSINESS, CONTACT THE PERSON IDENTIFIED ON THE NOTICE.

The text of Proposition 65 (Health and Safety Code Sections 25249.5 through 25249.13) is available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65law72003.html>. Regulations that provide more specific guidance on compliance, and that specify procedures to be followed by the State in carrying out certain aspects of the law, are found in Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations, sections 25102 through 27001.<sup>1</sup> These implementing regulations are available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65Regs.html>.

#### *WHAT DOES PROPOSITION 65 REQUIRE?*

***The "Proposition 65 List."*** Under Proposition 65, the lead agency (OEHHA) publishes a list of chemicals that are known to the State of California to cause cancer and/or reproductive toxicity. Chemicals are placed on the Proposition 65 list if they are known to cause cancer and/or birth defects or other reproductive harm, such as damage to

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<sup>1</sup> All further regulatory references are to sections of Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations unless otherwise indicated. The statute, regulations and relevant case law are available on the OEHHA website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>.

female or male reproductive systems or to the developing fetus. This list must be updated at least once a year. The current Proposition 65 list of chemicals is available on the OEHHA website at: [http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65\\_list/Newlist.html](http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65_list/Newlist.html).

Only those chemicals that are on the list are regulated under Proposition 65. Businesses that produce, use, release or otherwise engage in activities involving listed chemicals must comply with the following:

***Clear and reasonable warnings.*** A business is required to warn a person before “knowingly and intentionally” exposing that person to a listed chemical unless an exemption applies. The warning given must be “clear and reasonable.” This means that the warning must: (1) clearly make known that the chemical involved is known to cause cancer, or birth defects or other reproductive harm; and (2) be given in such a way that it will effectively reach the person before he or she is exposed to that chemical. Some exposures are exempt from the warning requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

***Prohibition from discharges into drinking water.*** A business must not knowingly discharge or release a listed chemical into water or onto land where it passes or probably will pass into a source of drinking water. Some discharges are exempt from this requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

#### *DOES PROPOSITION 65 PROVIDE ANY EXEMPTIONS?*

Yes. You should consult the current version of the statute and regulations (<http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>) to determine all applicable exemptions, the most common of which are the following:

***Grace Period.*** Proposition 65 warning requirements do not apply until 12 months after the chemical has been listed. The Proposition 65 discharge prohibition does not apply to a discharge or release of a chemical that takes place less than 20 months after the listing of the chemical.

***Governmental agencies and public water utilities.*** All agencies of the federal, state or local government, as well as entities operating public water systems, are exempt.

***Businesses with nine or fewer employees.*** Neither the warning requirement nor the discharge prohibition applies to a business that employs a total of nine or fewer employees. This includes all employees, not just those present in California.

**Exposures that pose no significant risk of cancer.** For chemicals that are listed under Proposition 65 as known to the State to cause cancer, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure occurs at a level that poses “no significant risk.” This means that the exposure is calculated to result in not more than one excess case of cancer in 100,000 individuals exposed over a 70-year lifetime. The Proposition 65 regulations identify specific “No Significant Risk Levels” (NSRLs) for many listed carcinogens. Exposures below these levels are exempt from the warning requirement. See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of NSRLs, and Section 25701 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

**Exposures that will produce no observable reproductive effect at 1,000 times the level in question.** For chemicals known to the State to cause reproductive toxicity, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure will produce no observable effect, even at 1,000 times the level in question. In other words, the level of exposure must be below the “no observable effect level” divided by 1,000. This number is known as the Maximum Allowable Dose Level (MADL). See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of MADLs, and Section 25801 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

**Exposures to Naturally Occurring Chemicals in Food.** Certain exposures to chemicals that naturally occur in foods (i.e., that do not result from any known human activity, including activity by someone other than the person causing the exposure) are exempt from the warning requirements of the law. If the chemical is a contaminant<sup>2</sup> it must be reduced to the lowest level feasible. Regulations explaining this exemption can be found in Section 25501.

**Discharges that do not result in a “significant amount” of the listed chemical entering any source of drinking water.** The prohibition from discharges into drinking water does not apply if the discharger is able to demonstrate that a “significant amount” of the listed chemical has not, does not, or will not pass into or probably pass into a source of drinking water, and that the discharge complies with all other applicable laws, regulations, permits, requirements, or orders. A “significant amount” means any detectable amount, except an amount that would meet the “no significant risk” level for chemicals that cause cancer or that is 1,000 times below the “no observable effect” level for chemicals that cause reproductive toxicity, if an individual were exposed to that amount in drinking water.

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<sup>2</sup> See Section 25501(a)(4).

## *HOW IS PROPOSITION 65 ENFORCED?*

Enforcement is carried out through civil lawsuits. These lawsuits may be brought by the Attorney General, any district attorney, or certain city attorneys. Lawsuits may also be brought by private parties acting in the public interest, but only after providing notice of the alleged violation to the Attorney General, the appropriate district attorney and city attorney, and the business accused of the violation. The notice must provide adequate information to allow the recipient to assess the nature of the alleged violation. The notice must comply with the information and procedural requirements specified in Section 25903 of Title 27 and sections 3100-3103 of Title 11. A private party may not pursue an independent enforcement action under Proposition 65 if one of the governmental officials noted above initiates an enforcement action within sixty days of the notice.

A business found to be in violation of Proposition 65 is subject to civil penalties of up to \$2,500 per day for each violation. In addition, the business may be ordered by a court to stop committing the violation.

A private party may not file an enforcement action based on certain exposures if the alleged violator meets specific conditions. For the following types of exposures, the Act provides an opportunity for the business to correct the alleged violation:

- An exposure to alcoholic beverages that are consumed on the alleged violator's premises to the extent onsite consumption is permitted by law;
- An exposure to a Proposition 65 listed chemical in a food or beverage prepared and sold on the alleged violator's premises that is primarily intended for immediate consumption on- or off-premises. This only applies if the chemical was not intentionally added to the food, and was formed by cooking or similar preparation of food or beverage components necessary to render the food or beverage palatable or to avoid microbiological contamination;
- An exposure to environmental tobacco smoke caused by entry of persons (other than employees) on premises owned or operated by the alleged violator where smoking is permitted at any location on the premises;
- An exposure to listed chemicals in engine exhaust, to the extent the exposure occurs inside a facility owned or operated by the alleged violator and primarily intended for parking non-commercial vehicles.

If a private party alleges that a violation occurred based on one of the exposures described above, the private party must first provide the alleged violator a notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form.

A copy of the notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form is included in Appendix B and can be downloaded from OEHHA's website at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/p65law72003.html>.

*FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE LAW OR REGULATIONS...*

Contact the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's Proposition 65 Implementation Office at (916) 445-6900 or via e-mail at [P65Public.Comments@oehha.ca.gov](mailto:P65Public.Comments@oehha.ca.gov).

Revised: May 2017

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 25249.12, Health and Safety Code. Reference: Sections 25249.5, 25249.6, 25249.7, 25249.9, 25249.10 and 25249.11, Health and Safety Code.

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# EXHIBIT B





## Environmental Research Center

3111 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 400  
San Diego, CA 92108  
619-500-3090

March 14, 2024

### NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE SECTION 25249.5 *ET SEQ.* (PROPOSITION 65)

Dear Alleged Violator and the Appropriate Public Enforcement Agencies:

I am the In-House Counsel for Environmental Research Center, Inc. (“ERC”). ERC is a California non-profit corporation dedicated to, among other causes, helping safeguard the public from health hazards by bringing about a reduction in the use and misuse of hazardous and toxic chemicals, facilitating a safe environment for consumers and employees and encouraging corporate responsibility.

ERC has identified violations of California’s Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (“Proposition 65”), which is codified at California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*, with respect to the products identified below. These violations have occurred and continue to occur because the alleged Violator identified below failed to provide required clear and reasonable warnings with these products. This letter serves as a notice of these violations to the alleged Violator and the appropriate public enforcement agencies. Pursuant to Section 25249.7(d) of the statute, ERC intends to file a private enforcement action in the public interest 60 days after effective service of this notice unless the public enforcement agencies have commenced and are diligently prosecuting an action to rectify these violations.

**General Information about Proposition 65.** A copy of a summary of Proposition 65, prepared by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, is attached with the copy of this letter served to the alleged Violator identified below.

**Alleged Violator.** The name of the company covered by this notice that violated Proposition 65 (hereinafter the “Violator”) is:

**Barebones Ventures, LLC**

**Consumer Products and Listed Chemical.** The products that is the subject of this notice and the chemical in those products identified as exceeding allowable levels are:

- 1. Bare Bones Organic Chicken Bone Broth Low Sodium - Lead**
- 2. Bare Bones Organic Chicken Bone Broth - Lead**
- 3. Bare Bones Grass-Fed Beef Bone Broth - Lead**

On February 27, 1987, the State of California officially listed lead as a chemical known to cause

March 14, 2024

Page 2

developmental toxicity, and male and female reproductive toxicity. On October 1, 1992, the State of California officially listed lead and lead compounds as chemicals known to cause cancer.

It should be noted that ERC may continue to investigate other products that may reveal further violations and result in subsequent notices of violations.

**Route of Exposure.** The consumer exposures that are the subject of this notice result from the recommended use of these products. Consequently, the route of exposure to this chemical has been and continues to be through ingestion.

**Approximate Time Period of Violations.** Ongoing violations have occurred every day since at least March 14, 2021, as well as every day since the products were introduced into the California marketplace, and will continue every day until clear and reasonable warnings are provided to product purchasers and users or until this known toxic chemical is either removed from or reduced to allowable levels in the products. Proposition 65 requires that a clear and reasonable warning be provided prior to exposure to the identified chemical. The method of warning should be a warning that appears on the product label. The Violator violated Proposition 65 because it failed to provide persons ingesting these products with appropriate warnings that they are being exposed to this chemical.

Consistent with the public interest goals of Proposition 65 and a desire to have these ongoing violations of California law quickly rectified, ERC is interested in seeking a constructive resolution of this matter that includes an enforceable written agreement by the Violator to: (1) reformulate the identified products so as to eliminate further exposures to the identified chemical, or provide appropriate warnings on the labels of these products; (2) pay an appropriate civil penalty; and (3) provide clear and reasonable warnings compliant with Proposition 65 to all persons located in California who purchased the above products in the last three years. Such a resolution will prevent further unwarned consumer exposures to the identified chemical, as well as expensive and time-consuming litigation.

Please direct all questions concerning this notice to my attention, or Chris Heptinstall, Executive Director of ERC, at the above listed address and telephone number.

Sincerely,



---

Charles Poss  
In-House Counsel  
Environmental Research Center

Attachments

- Certificate of Merit
- Certificate of Service
- OEHHA Summary (to Barebones Ventures, LLC and its Registered Agents for Service of Process only)
- Additional Supporting Information for Certificate of Merit (to AG only)

**CERTIFICATE OF MERIT**

**Re: Environmental Research Center, Inc.’s Notice of Proposition 65 Violations by Barebones Ventures, LLC**

I, Charles Poss, declare:

1. This Certificate of Merit accompanies the attached 60-day notice in which it is alleged the party identified in the notice violated California Health & Safety Code Section 25249.6 by failing to provide clear and reasonable warnings.

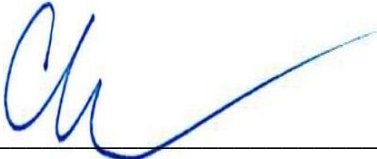
2. I am an attorney for the noticing party.

3. I have consulted with one or more persons with relevant and appropriate experience or expertise who have reviewed facts, studies, or other data regarding the exposure to the listed chemical that is the subject of the notice.

4. Based on the information obtained through those consultants, and on other information in my possession, I believe there is a reasonable and meritorious case for the private action. I understand that “reasonable and meritorious case for the private action” means that the information provides a credible basis that all elements of the plaintiff’s case can be established and that the information did not prove that the alleged Violator will be able to establish any of the affirmative defenses set forth in the statute.

5. Along with the copy of this Certificate of Merit served on the Attorney General is attached additional factual information sufficient to establish the basis for this certificate, including the information identified in California Health & Safety Code §25249.7(h)(2), i.e., (1) the identity of the persons consulted with and relied on by the certifier, and (2) the facts, studies, or other data reviewed by those persons.

Dated: March 14, 2024

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Charles Poss

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE PURSUANT TO 27 CCR § 25903**

I, the undersigned, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the following is true and correct:

I am a citizen of the United States and over the age of 18 years of age. My business address is 306 Joy Street, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia 30742. I am a resident or employed in the county where the mailing occurred. The envelope or package was placed in the mail at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

On March 14, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; “THE SAFE DRINKING WATER AND TOXIC ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1986 (PROPOSITION 65): A SUMMARY”** on the following parties by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties listed below and depositing it in a U.S. Postal Service Office with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by Certified Mail:

Current President or CEO  
Barebones Ventures, LLC  
4456 Vandever Ave, Ste 6  
San Diego, CA 92120

Corporation Service Company  
(Registered Agent for Barebones Ventures, LLC)  
251 Little Falls Dr  
Wilmington, DE 19808

Current President or CEO  
Barebones Ventures, LLC  
5065 Green Spruce Dr  
Sylvania, OH 43560

Katherine Harvey  
(Registered Agent for Barebones Ventures, LLC)  
1362 Crestwood Rd  
Toledo, OH 43612

Current President or CEO  
Barebones Ventures, LLC  
225 E Main St, Ste 204  
Medford, OR 97501

Katherine Harvey  
(Registered Agent for Barebones Ventures, LLC)  
225 E Main St, Ste 204  
Medford, OR 97501

On March 14, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF MERIT AS REQUIRED BY CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.7(d)(1)** were served on the following party when a true and correct copy thereof was uploaded on the California Attorney General’s website, which can be accessed at <https://oag.ca.gov/prop65/add-60-day-notice> :

Office of the California Attorney General  
Prop 65 Enforcement Reporting  
1515 Clay Street, Suite 2000  
Post Office Box 70550  
Oakland, CA 94612-0550

On March 14, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** were served on the following parties when a true and correct copy thereof was sent via electronic mail to each of the parties listed below:

Pamela Y. Price, District Attorney  
Alameda County  
7677 Oakport Street, Suite 650  
Oakland, CA 94621  
CEPDProp65@acgov.org

Barbara Yook, District Attorney  
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Prop65Env@co.calaveras.ca.us

Notice of Violations of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

March 14, 2024

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Notice of Violations of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

March 14, 2024

Page 6

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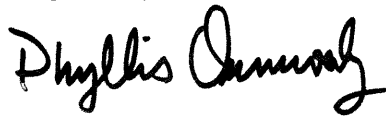
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daspecialops@ventura.org

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Jeff W. Reisig, District Attorney  
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cfepd@yolocounty.org

On March 14, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** on each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto, and depositing it with the U.S. Postal Service with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by First Class Mail.

Executed on March 14, 2024, in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.



Phyllis Dunwoody

**Service List**

District Attorney, Alpine  
County  
P.O. Box 248  
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Markleeville, CA 96120

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County  
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Jackson, CA 95642

District Attorney, Butte  
County  
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245  
Oroville, CA 95965

District Attorney, Colusa  
County  
310 6<sup>th</sup> St  
Colusa, CA 95932

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County  
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Crescent City, CA 95531

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Willows, CA 95988

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County  
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Eureka, CA 95501

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El Centro, CA 92243

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Hanford, CA 93230

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Lakeport, CA 95453

District Attorney, Los Angeles  
County  
Hall of Justice  
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Los Angeles, CA 90012

District Attorney, Madera  
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Madera, CA 93637

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Alturas, CA 96101-4020

District Attorney, Mono  
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Hollister, CA 95023

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Bernardino County  
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San Bernadino, CA 92415

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Redwood City, CA 94063

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Redding, CA 96001

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Fairfield, CA 94533

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Modesto, CA 95354

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District Attorney, Trinity  
County  
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Weaverville, CA 96093

District Attorney, Tuolumne  
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Sonora, CA 95370

District Attorney, Yuba  
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Marysville, CA 95901

Los Angeles City Attorney's  
Office  
City Hall East  
200 N. Main Street, Suite 800  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

## APPENDIX A

### OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARD ASSESSMENT CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

#### THE SAFE DRINKING WATER AND TOXIC ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1986 (PROPOSITION 65): A SUMMARY

The following summary has been prepared by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the lead agency for the implementation of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (commonly known as "Proposition 65"). A copy of this summary must be included as an attachment to any notice of violation served upon an alleged violator of the Act. The summary provides basic information about the provisions of the law, and is intended to serve only as a convenient source of general information. It is not intended to provide authoritative guidance on the meaning or application of the law. The reader is directed to the statute and OEHHA implementing regulations (see citations below) for further information.

FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING THE BASIS FOR THE ALLEGATIONS IN THE NOTICE RELATED TO YOUR BUSINESS, CONTACT THE PERSON IDENTIFIED ON THE NOTICE.

The text of Proposition 65 (Health and Safety Code Sections 25249.5 through 25249.13) is available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65law72003.html>. Regulations that provide more specific guidance on compliance, and that specify procedures to be followed by the State in carrying out certain aspects of the law, are found in Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations, sections 25102 through 27001.<sup>1</sup> These implementing regulations are available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65Regs.html>.

#### *WHAT DOES PROPOSITION 65 REQUIRE?*

***The "Proposition 65 List."*** Under Proposition 65, the lead agency (OEHHA) publishes a list of chemicals that are known to the State of California to cause cancer and/or reproductive toxicity. Chemicals are placed on the Proposition 65 list if they are known to cause cancer and/or birth defects or other reproductive harm, such as damage to

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<sup>1</sup> All further regulatory references are to sections of Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations unless otherwise indicated. The statute, regulations and relevant case law are available on the OEHHA website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>.



female or male reproductive systems or to the developing fetus. This list must be updated at least once a year. The current Proposition 65 list of chemicals is available on the OEHHA website at: [http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65\\_list/Newlist.html](http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65_list/Newlist.html).

Only those chemicals that are on the list are regulated under Proposition 65. Businesses that produce, use, release or otherwise engage in activities involving listed chemicals must comply with the following:

***Clear and reasonable warnings.*** A business is required to warn a person before “knowingly and intentionally” exposing that person to a listed chemical unless an exemption applies. The warning given must be “clear and reasonable.” This means that the warning must: (1) clearly make known that the chemical involved is known to cause cancer, or birth defects or other reproductive harm; and (2) be given in such a way that it will effectively reach the person before he or she is exposed to that chemical. Some exposures are exempt from the warning requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

***Prohibition from discharges into drinking water.*** A business must not knowingly discharge or release a listed chemical into water or onto land where it passes or probably will pass into a source of drinking water. Some discharges are exempt from this requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

#### *DOES PROPOSITION 65 PROVIDE ANY EXEMPTIONS?*

Yes. You should consult the current version of the statute and regulations (<http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>) to determine all applicable exemptions, the most common of which are the following:

***Grace Period.*** Proposition 65 warning requirements do not apply until 12 months after the chemical has been listed. The Proposition 65 discharge prohibition does not apply to a discharge or release of a chemical that takes place less than 20 months after the listing of the chemical.

***Governmental agencies and public water utilities.*** All agencies of the federal, state or local government, as well as entities operating public water systems, are exempt.

***Businesses with nine or fewer employees.*** Neither the warning requirement nor the discharge prohibition applies to a business that employs a total of nine or fewer employees. This includes all employees, not just those present in California.

**Exposures that pose no significant risk of cancer.** For chemicals that are listed under Proposition 65 as known to the State to cause cancer, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure occurs at a level that poses “no significant risk.” This means that the exposure is calculated to result in not more than one excess case of cancer in 100,000 individuals exposed over a 70-year lifetime. The Proposition 65 regulations identify specific “No Significant Risk Levels” (NSRLs) for many listed carcinogens. Exposures below these levels are exempt from the warning requirement. See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of NSRLs, and Section 25701 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

**Exposures that will produce no observable reproductive effect at 1,000 times the level in question.** For chemicals known to the State to cause reproductive toxicity, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure will produce no observable effect, even at 1,000 times the level in question. In other words, the level of exposure must be below the “no observable effect level” divided by 1,000. This number is known as the Maximum Allowable Dose Level (MADL). See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of MADLs, and Section 25801 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

**Exposures to Naturally Occurring Chemicals in Food.** Certain exposures to chemicals that naturally occur in foods (i.e., that do not result from any known human activity, including activity by someone other than the person causing the exposure) are exempt from the warning requirements of the law. If the chemical is a contaminant<sup>2</sup> it must be reduced to the lowest level feasible. Regulations explaining this exemption can be found in Section 25501.

**Discharges that do not result in a “significant amount” of the listed chemical entering any source of drinking water.** The prohibition from discharges into drinking water does not apply if the discharger is able to demonstrate that a “significant amount” of the listed chemical has not, does not, or will not pass into or probably pass into a source of drinking water, and that the discharge complies with all other applicable laws, regulations, permits, requirements, or orders. A “significant amount” means any detectable amount, except an amount that would meet the “no significant risk” level for chemicals that cause cancer or that is 1,000 times below the “no observable effect” level for chemicals that cause reproductive toxicity, if an individual were exposed to that amount in drinking water.

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<sup>2</sup> See Section 25501(a)(4).

## *HOW IS PROPOSITION 65 ENFORCED?*

Enforcement is carried out through civil lawsuits. These lawsuits may be brought by the Attorney General, any district attorney, or certain city attorneys. Lawsuits may also be brought by private parties acting in the public interest, but only after providing notice of the alleged violation to the Attorney General, the appropriate district attorney and city attorney, and the business accused of the violation. The notice must provide adequate information to allow the recipient to assess the nature of the alleged violation. The notice must comply with the information and procedural requirements specified in Section 25903 of Title 27 and sections 3100-3103 of Title 11. A private party may not pursue an independent enforcement action under Proposition 65 if one of the governmental officials noted above initiates an enforcement action within sixty days of the notice.

A business found to be in violation of Proposition 65 is subject to civil penalties of up to \$2,500 per day for each violation. In addition, the business may be ordered by a court to stop committing the violation.

A private party may not file an enforcement action based on certain exposures if the alleged violator meets specific conditions. For the following types of exposures, the Act provides an opportunity for the business to correct the alleged violation:

- An exposure to alcoholic beverages that are consumed on the alleged violator's premises to the extent onsite consumption is permitted by law;
- An exposure to a Proposition 65 listed chemical in a food or beverage prepared and sold on the alleged violator's premises that is primarily intended for immediate consumption on- or off-premises. This only applies if the chemical was not intentionally added to the food, and was formed by cooking or similar preparation of food or beverage components necessary to render the food or beverage palatable or to avoid microbiological contamination;
- An exposure to environmental tobacco smoke caused by entry of persons (other than employees) on premises owned or operated by the alleged violator where smoking is permitted at any location on the premises;
- An exposure to listed chemicals in engine exhaust, to the extent the exposure occurs inside a facility owned or operated by the alleged violator and primarily intended for parking non-commercial vehicles.

If a private party alleges that a violation occurred based on one of the exposures described above, the private party must first provide the alleged violator a notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form.

A copy of the notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form is included in Appendix B and can be downloaded from OEHHA's website at:  
<http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/p65law72003.html>.

*FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE LAW OR REGULATIONS...*

Contact the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's Proposition 65 Implementation Office at (916) 445-6900 or via e-mail at [P65Public.Comments@oehha.ca.gov](mailto:P65Public.Comments@oehha.ca.gov).

Revised: May 2017

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 25249.12, Health and Safety Code. Reference: Sections 25249.5, 25249.6, 25249.7, 25249.9, 25249.10 and 25249.11, Health and Safety Code.