

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28

MIGUEL A. CUSTODIO, JR., STATE BAR NO. 248744  
VINEET DUBEY, STATE BAR NO. 243208  
CUSTODIO & DUBEY LLP  
448 S. Hill St., Suite 615  
Los Angeles, CA 90013  
Telephone: (213) 593-9095  
Facsimile: (213) 785-2899

**FILED**  
Superior Court of California  
County of Los Angeles  
11/02/2020

Sherril R. Carter, Executive Officer / Clerk of Court  
By:           R. Karapetyan           Deputy

Attorneys for Plaintiff Ecological Alliance, LLC

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
(Unlimited Jurisdiction)

ECOLOGICAL ALLIANCE, LLC, a California  
limited liability company,

Plaintiff,

v.

NEWELL BRANDS INC., a Delaware  
corporation,

Defendant.

Case No.: 20STCV15413

~~PROPOSED~~ STIPULATED  
CONSENT JUDGMENT

1  
2 Plaintiff Ecological Alliance, LLC (“Plaintiff”), and Defendant Newell Brands Inc.  
3 (“Defendant”) hereby enter into this Stipulated Consent Judgment (“Consent Judgment”) as  
4 follows:

5 WHEREAS: On or about February 11, 2020, Plaintiff, through Plaintiff’s counsel, served  
6 a 60 Day Notice to Defendant, the California Attorney General, the District Attorneys of every  
7 County in the State of California, and the City Attorneys for every City in the State of California  
8 with a population greater than 750,000 (collectively, “Public Prosecutor(s)”) alleging that  
9 Defendant violated California’s Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986,  
10 California Health and Safety Code § 25249.6, et seq., and its implementing regulations  
11 (collectively, “Proposition 65”) and that Plaintiff intended to file an enforcement action in the  
12 public interest; and

13 WHEREAS: Plaintiff alleges that Defendant manufactured and/or distributed cooking  
14 forks of varying sizes and configurations including cooking forks bearing UPC #076501150872  
15 (collectively the “Covered Products”) that were sold or distributed for sale in California and  
16 further alleges that those Covered Products expose consumers in the State of California to  
17 chemicals including Di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate “DEHP, which are listed by the State of California  
18 pursuant to California Health and Safety Code § 25249.8; and

19 WHEREAS: Plaintiff further alleges that persons in the State of California were exposed  
20 to DEHP in Covered Products without being provided the Proposition 65 warning set out at  
21 California Health and Safety Code § 25249.6 and its implementing regulations (“Proposition 65  
22 Warning”);

23 WHEREAS: Defendant denies the allegations of the 60 Day Notice, and denies that it has  
24 violated Proposition 65, that any of its products created an exposure and expressly denies that it  
25 has engaged in any wrongdoing whatsoever,

26 WHEREAS: Plaintiff seeks to provide the public with Proposition 65 warnings and  
27 believes that this objective is achieved by the actions described in this Consent Judgment; and

28 WHEREAS: Plaintiff and Defendant wish to resolve their differences without the delay  
and expense of litigation.

1  
2 NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED AND AGREED UPON AS BETWEEN  
3 PLAINTIFF ACTING IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND DEFENDANT AS FOLLOWS:  
4

5 **INTRODUCTION**

6 1.1. On February 11, 2020, Plaintiff served the 60-Day Notice upon Defendant and on  
7 Public Prosecutors. No Public Prosecutors commenced an enforcement action. No  
8 Public Prosecutor having commenced an enforcement action, Plaintiff proceeded to file  
9 its Complaint against Defendant in the present action.

10 1.2. Defendant employs ten (10) or more persons.

11 1.3. For purposes of this Consent Judgment only, Plaintiff and Defendant (the  
12 “Parties”) stipulate that: 1) this Court has jurisdiction over the allegations of violation  
13 contained in the Complaint, and personal jurisdiction over Defendant as to the acts  
14 alleged in the Complaint; 2) venue is proper in the County of Los Angeles; and 3) this  
15 Court has jurisdiction to enter this Consent Judgment as a full and final resolution of all  
16 claims which were or could have been raised in the Complaint based on the facts alleged  
17 therein with respect to the Covered Products, and of all claims which were or could have  
18 been raised by any person or entity based in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, on the  
19 facts alleged in the 60-Day Notice, in the present action, or arising therefrom or related  
20 thereto, with respect to Covered Products, including any Proposition 65 claim arising out  
21 of an alleged exposure to Covered Products (collectively, “Proposition 65 Claims”).

22 1.4. The Parties enter into this Consent Judgment as a full and final settlement of the  
23 Proposition 65 Claims, for the purpose of avoiding prolonged and costly litigation and of  
24 resolving the issues raised therein both as to past and future conduct. By execution of  
25 this Consent Judgment and agreeing to comply with its terms, the Parties do not admit  
26 any fact, conclusion of law, or violation of law, nor shall Defendant’s compliance with  
27 the Consent Judgment constitute or be construed as an admission by Defendant of any  
28 fact, conclusion of law, or violation of law. Defendant denies the material, factual, and

1  
2 legal allegations in the 60-Day Notice and the Complaint and expressly denies any  
3 wrongdoing whatsoever.

4 **2. DEFINITIONS**

5 2.1. "Effective Date" shall mean, with respect to this Consent Judgment, the date the  
6 Consent Judgment has been approved and entered by the Court.

7 **3. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**

8 3.1. For each Covered Product, subject to Section 3.5, Defendant agrees to undertake,  
9 or cause to be undertaken on its behalf, either (a) reformulation of the Covered Product to  
10 bring it within the Proposition 65 exemption identified in Section 3.2 below, or  
11 (b) provide a warning as prescribed in Sections 3.3-3.4 below. Compliance with this  
12 Section 3.1 will constitute compliance by Defendant and Released Parties identified in  
13 Section 5.1 with all requirements of Proposition 65 relating to DEHP exposure in the  
14 Covered Products:

15 3.2. Proposition 65 Exemption for the Covered Products

16 Subject to Section 3.5, any Covered Product that Defendant manufactures, distributes,  
17 markets, sells, or offers for sale, to consumers in the State of California after the Effective  
18 Date shall be deemed to comply with Proposition 65, and be exempt from any Proposition  
19 65 warning requirements with respect to DEHP, if no "Accessible Component Part" of  
20 such Covered Product contains more than 0.1 percent (1,000 parts per million) of DEHP.  
21 For purposes of this Consent Judgment, "Accessible Component Part" shall mean  
22 components of the Covered Products to which a person would be exposed to DEHP by  
23 direct contact during normal use of the Covered Product.

24 3.3. Warning Option

25 Subject to section 3.5, for Covered Products that are manufactured, distributed, marketed,  
26 sold or shipped for sale to consumers by Defendant in the State of California, after the  
27 Effective Date, that do not meet the warning exemption standard set forth in Section 3.2  
28 above, Defendant shall provide warning as described in Section 3.4 below. No  
Proposition 65 warning shall be required as to any Covered Products that are already in

1  
2 the stream of commerce as of the Effective Date, and all such Covered Products are  
3 hereby deemed to be exempt from Proposition 65 with respect to DEHP.

4 3.4. Warning Language

5 Where required to meet the criteria set forth in Section 3.3, Defendant shall provide one of  
6 the following warning statements on or within the unit packaging of the Covered  
7 Products, or affixed to the Covered Products, displayed in a reasonably conspicuous  
8 manner:

- 9 (1) **WARNING:** This product can expose you to DEHP, which is  
10 known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects or  
11 other reproductive harm. For more info go to  
12 [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov).  
13 (2) **WARNING:** Cancer and Reproductive Harm –  
14 [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov).

15 If Defendant elects to use the warning statements identified in either (1) or (2)  
16 above, it may also include a symbol consisting of a black exclamation point in a  
17 yellow equilateral triangle with a bold black outline. Where the sign, label or shelf  
18 tag for the product is not printed using the color yellow, the symbol may be printed  
19 in black and white. The symbol shall be placed to the left of the text of the  
20 warning, in a size no smaller than the height of the word “WARNING”.

21 3.5. 90-Day Grace Period

22 Although Defendant and Released Parties identified in Section 5.1 shall be deemed in  
23 compliance on the Effective Date, Defendant shall have a ninety (90)-day grace period  
24 from the Effective Date to complete the reformulation or warning steps provided in  
25 Sections 3.1 – 3.4.

26 **4. MONETARY RELIEF**

27 4.1. Within twenty (20) days of the date the Effective Date, Defendant shall pay the  
28 total sum of \$39,000 which includes \$9,000 in civil penalties and \$30,000 in payment of  
Plaintiff’s costs and attorney’s fees. The \$9,000 civil penalty shall be apportioned

1  
2 pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 25249.12 (d), with 75%, or \$6,750, paid to  
3 the State of California's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment and 25%, or  
4 \$2,250, payable to Plaintiff.

5 4.2. The payments specified in Section 4.1. shall be made by wire transfer to Plaintiff's  
6 counsel Custodio & Dubey LLP as set forth below. Plaintiff's counsel will remit the  
7 portions due to the State of California Office of Environmental Health Hazard  
8 Assessment and to Plaintiff. Defendant shall have no liability with respect to the  
9 distribution of funds once payment has been made to Plaintiff's counsel.

10 Bank: Bank of America, N.A.

11 Routing Transit No.: 026009593

12 Account No.: 325104702031

13 Beneficiary: Custodio & Dubey LLP

14 **5. CLAIMS COVERED AND RELEASE**

15 5.1. This Consent Judgment is a full, final, and binding resolution between Plaintiff, on  
16 behalf of itself, and acting in the public interest, and Defendant, and all of Defendant's  
17 parent companies, as well as all of Defendant's officers, directors, members,  
18 shareholders, employees, attorneys, agents, parent companies, subsidiaries, divisions,  
19 affiliates, suppliers, franchisees, licensees, and retailers, their parent and all subsidiaries,  
20 and affiliates, thereof, their respective employees, agents and assigns, as well as all other  
21 upstream and downstream entities in the distribution chain for any of the Covered  
22 Products, and the predecessors, successors, and assigns of any of them, including but not  
23 limited to Target Corporation (collectively, the "Released Parties"), for any alleged  
24 violation of Proposition 65, and its implementing regulations, for failure to provide  
25 Proposition 65 warnings for the Covered Products with respect to DBP, and fully resolves  
26 all claims that have been brought, or which could have been brought in this action up to  
27 and including the Effective Date. Plaintiff on behalf of itself, and in the public interest,  
28 hereby discharges the Released Parties from any and all claims, actions, causes of action,  
suits, demands, liabilities, damages, penalties, fees, costs and expenses asserted, or that

1  
2 could have been asserted, with respect to any alleged violation of Proposition 65 arising  
3 from the failure to provide Proposition 65 warnings about exposures to DBP for any or  
4 all of the Covered Products, through and including the Effective Date.

5 5.2. It is possible that other claims not known to the Parties arising out of the facts  
6 contained in the 60-Day Notice, or alleged in the Complaint, relating to the Covered  
7 Products, will hereafter be discovered or developed. Plaintiff, on behalf of itself only, on  
8 the one hand, and Defendant, on the other hand, acknowledge that this Consent Judgment  
9 is expressly intended to cover and include all such claims through and including the  
10 Effective Date, including all rights of action thereon. Plaintiff and Defendant  
11 acknowledge that the claims released in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 may include unknown  
12 claims, and nevertheless intend to release such claims, and in doing so waive California  
13 Civil Code § 1542 which reads as follows:

14 A GENERAL RELEASE DOES NOT EXTEND TO CLAIMS WHICH THE  
15 CREDITOR DOES NOT KNOW OR SUSPECT TO EXIST IN HIS OR HER  
16 FAVOR AT THE TIME OF EXECUTING THE RELEASE, WHICH IF  
17 KNOWN BY HIM OR HER MUST HAVE MATERIALLY AFFECTED HIS  
18 OR HER SETTLEMENT WITH THE DEBTOR.

19 5.3. Plaintiff understands and acknowledges that the significance and consequence of  
20 this waiver of California Civil Code § 1542 is that even if Plaintiff suffers future damages  
21 arising out of or resulting from, or related directly or indirectly to, in whole or in part, the  
22 Covered Products, including but not limited to any exposure to, or failure to warn with  
23 respect to exposure to, the Covered Products, Plaintiff will not be able to make any claim  
24 for those damages against any of the Released Parties.

25 5.4. Compliance by Defendant with the terms of this Consent Judgment shall constitute  
26 compliance with Proposition 65 with respect to exposure to DEHP in the Covered  
27 Products as set forth in the 60 Day Notice and/or the Complaint.  
28

1  
2 **6. COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTION 25249.7(F)**

3 6.1. Plaintiff and its attorneys agree to comply with the reporting form requirements  
4 referenced in California Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(f).

5 **7. PROVISION OF NOTICE**

6 7.1. When any Party is entitled to receive any notice or writing under this Consent  
7 Judgment, the notice or writing shall be sent by first class certified mail with return  
8 receipt requested, or by electronic mail, as follows:

9 To Defendant:

10 Elizabeth V. McNulty, Esq.  
11 Evans, Fears & Schuttert, LLP  
12 4440 Von Karman Avenue, Suite 250  
13 Newport Beach, Ca. 92660  
14 [emcnulty@efstriallaw.com](mailto:emcnulty@efstriallaw.com)

15 To Plaintiff:

16 Vineet Dubey, Esq.  
17 Custodio & Dubey LLP  
18 448 S. Hill St., Ste 615  
19 Los Angeles, CA 90013  
20 [dubey@cd-lawyers.com](mailto:dubey@cd-lawyers.com)

21 7.2. Any party may modify the person and address to whom the notice is to be sent by  
22 sending the other Party notice that is transmitted in the manner set forth in section 7.1.

23 **8. COURT APPROVAL**

24 8.1. Upon execution of his Consent Judgment by all Parties, Plaintiff shall prepare and  
25 file, at its sole cost and expense, a Motion for Approval of this Consent Judgment that  
26 Defendant shall support. This Consent Judgment shall not become effective until  
27 approved and entered by the Court. If this Consent Judgment is not entered by the Court,  
28 it shall be of no force or effect, and shall not be introduced into evidence or otherwise  
used in any proceeding for any purpose.

**9. GOVERNING LAW AND CONSTRUCTION**

9.1. The terms of this Consent Judgment shall be governed by the laws of the State of  
California.



1  
2 **10. ENTIRE AGREEMENT**

3 10.1. This Consent Judgment contains the sole and entire agreement and understanding  
4 of the Parties with respect to the entire subject matter hereof, and any and all prior  
5 discussions, negotiations, commitments, or understandings related thereto, if any, are  
6 hereby merged herein and therein.

7 10.2. There are no warranties, representations, or other agreements between the Parties  
8 except as expressly set forth herein. No representations, oral or otherwise, express or  
9 implied, other than those specifically referred to in this Consent Judgment have been  
10 made by any Party hereto.

11 10.3. No other agreements not specifically contained or referenced herein, oral or  
12 otherwise, shall be deemed to exist or to bind any of the Parties hereto. Any agreements  
13 specifically contained or referenced herein, oral or otherwise, shall be deemed to exist or  
14 to bind any of the Parties hereto only to the extent that they are expressly incorporated  
15 herein.

16 10.4. No supplementation, modification, waiver, or termination of this Consent  
17 Judgment shall be binding unless executed in writing by the Party to be bound thereby,  
18 and approved and ordered by the Court.

19 10.5. No waiver of any of the provisions of this Consent Judgment shall be deemed or  
20 shall constitute a waiver of any of the other provisions hereof whether or not similar, nor  
21 shall such waiver constitute a continuing waiver.

22 **11. RETENTION OF JURISDICTION**

23 11.1. This Court shall retain jurisdiction of this matter to implement or modify the  
24 Consent Judgment.

25 **12. NO EFFECT ON OTHER SETTLEMENTS**

26 12.1. Nothing in this Consent Judgment shall preclude Plaintiff from resolving any  
27 claim against another entity on terms that are different from those contained in this  
28 Consent Judgment.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28

**13. EXECUTION IN COUNTERPARTS**

13.1. This Consent Judgment may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed to be an original, and all of which, taken together, shall constitute the same document. Execution of the Consent Judgment by e-mail, facsimile, or other electronic means, shall constitute legal and binding execution and delivery. Any photocopy of the executed Consent Judgment shall have the same force and effect as the original.

**14. AUTHORIZATION**

14.1. The undersigned are authorized to stipulate to, enter into, and execute this Consent Judgment on behalf of their respective parties, and have read, understood, and agree to all of the terms and conditions of this Consent Judgment.

**15. SEVERABILITY**

15.1. If subsequent to Court approval of this Consent Judgment, any part or provision is declared by a Court to be invalid, void, or unenforceable, the remaining portions or provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

**AGREED TO:**

**Ecological Alliance LLC**

Date: April 21, 2020

By: [Signature]

Harmony Welsh, Managing Member

**AGREED TO:**

**Newell Brands Inc.**

Date: April 17, 2020

By: [Signature]  
Marc P. Clements, Chief Litigation Counsel

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED that, pursuant to Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(f)(4) and Code of Civil Procedure § 664.6, judgment is hereby entered.

November 2, 2020

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_



**Lia Martin**

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT  
Lia Martin / Judge