# 60-DAY NOTICE OF VIOLATION

# OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(d) (PROPOSITION 65)

Date: June 7, 2024

To: Sheng-Chieh Su, Chief Executive Officer, Associated Electrics, Inc.;

California Attorney General's Office;

District Attorney's Office for 58 Counties; and

City Attorneys for San Francisco, San Diego, San Jose, Sacramento & Los Angeles

From: Blue Sky Forever

## I. INTRODUCTION

Blue Sky Forever is a California nonprofit corporation acting in the public interest pursuant to California Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(d). Blue Sky Forever seeks to promote awareness of exposures to toxic chemicals in products sold in California and, if possible, to improve human health by eliminating hazardous substances contained in such items, promoting corporate responsibility.

This 60-Day Notice of Violation ("Notice") is being provided to the alleged violator, Associated Electrics, Inc. ("Notice Recipient"), as well as the California Attorney General's Office, the District Attorney's Offices for 58 Counties, and City Attorneys for San Francisco, San Diego, San Jose, Sacramento and Los Angeles.

Blue Sky Forever provides this Notice after identifying violations of California's Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, codified at California Health & Safety Code § 25249.5 et seq. ("Proposition 65"), based on the failure to provide a clear and reasonable health hazard warning in connection with the sale or use of the products, listed below, in the State of California. The Notice Recipient is hereby given notice it violated and continues to violate Proposition 65 with respect to the warning requirement, codified at California's Health & Safety Code § 25249.6: "No person in the course of doing business shall knowingly and intentionally expose any individual to a chemical known to the State to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without first giving a clear and reasonable warning to such individual." Without proper warnings about the toxic effects of exposures to listed chemicals, citizens in California lack the information necessary to make an informed decision as to whether or how to eliminate or reduce their risk of exposure from the reasonably foreseeable use of products containing listed chemicals.

## II. NATURE OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS

<u>Product</u>. The specific type or category of products ("Products") that are the subject of this Notice are as follows:

Exemplar Product	Category/Type	Retailer	Manufacturer/Distributor
Associated 91690 Brass	Brass Arm	Tony's Hobbies	Associated Electrics, Inc.
Arm Mount C, 25g B6	Mounts	thobbies.com	
SKU: ASC91690		a contraction of the country of the	
UPC: 7 84695 91690 6			

Identified above is a specific example of Products recently purchased and witnessed as being available for sale or use in the State of California, within the *category* of offending products

covered by this Notice. The identified retailers, manufacturers and/or distributors of the Products are based on publicly available information.

The Exemplar Product is identified for the Notice Recipient's benefit to assist in its investigation into the alleged violations that are the subject of this Notice. The specific identified Exemplar Product is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all such products potentially in violation of Proposition 65. The Notice Recipient is now obligated to conduct a good faith investigation into other products within the category or of the type, identified above, that were manufactured, imported, sold or distributed for sale, or that have otherwise been in the Notice Recipient's custody or control during the relevant period, identified below, to ensure the requisite health hazard warnings are provided to individuals in California prior to purchase.

<u>Listed Chemical</u>. The chemical that is the subject of this Notice is the heavy metal, Lead. The State of California listed Lead as a chemical known to cause developmental toxicity, male reproductive toxicity, and female reproductive toxicity on February 27, 1987, and as a chemical known to cause cancer on October 1, 1992.

Routes of Exposure. The exposures subject to this Notice result from the purchase, acquisition and handling of Products containing Lead. Exposures occur when individuals, including women of childbearing age, handle, touch or otherwise utilize brass arm mounts containing Lead in accordance with the Products' reasonably foreseeable and intended uses, resulting in exposures through ingestion and dermal absorption. Individuals ingest Lead when they touch or handle the Products or intermediary objects, transferring the chemical from their fingers or hands to their mouths. Dermal absorption of Lead occurs when individuals handle, touch, or utilize the Products.

The California State Plan for Occupational Safety and Health incorporates the provisions of Proposition 65, as approved by Federal OSHA on June 6, 1997. This approval specifically placed certain conditions with regard to occupational exposures on Proposition 65, including that it does not apply to the conduct of manufacturers occurring outside the State of California. The approval also provides that an employer may use the means of compliance in the general hazard communication requirements to comply with Proposition 65. It also requires that supplemental enforcement is subject to the supervision of the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Accordingly, any settlement, civil complaint, or substantive court orders in this matter must be submitted to the Attorney General.

<u>Violations and Time Period of Exposure.</u> Blue Sky Forever alleges the Notice Recipient knowingly and intentionally exposed, and continues to knowingly and intentionally expose, individuals within the State of California to Lead, without first giving a health hazard warning regarding the chemical's toxic effects, as required by Proposition 65, by failing to provide clear and reasonable warnings to consumers and users that the Products can expose users to Lead.

Exposures caused by the use of the Products have occurred each day since the Products were introduced into the California marketplace, but, at a minimum, since June 7, 2023, and, potentially, as far back as June 7, 2021. Because the Products lack clear and reasonable warnings regarding the toxic effects of exposures to Lead, each Product sold during this period and not accompanied by a warning constitutes a violation by the Notice Recipient and/or other sellers of the Products, whether sold directly through retailers located in, or with locations in, California, via the internet, or through catalog purchases by customers and individuals located in California. Moreover, these exposures are ongoing and will continue either until clear and reasonable warnings are provided to protect consumers and users or until this known toxic chemical is removed from the Products or reduced to allowable levels.

## III. RESOLUTION OF NOTICED CLAIMS

Consistent with the public interest goals of Proposition 65, Blue Sky Forever seeks to pursue a constructive resolution of this matter to quickly rectify ongoing violations of California law. To that end, based on the allegations set forth in this Notice and pursuant to Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(d), Blue Sky Forever intends to file a private enforcement action in the public interest sixty (60) days after effective service of this Notice, unless the appropriate public enforcement agencies have commenced and are diligently prosecuting an action to rectify these allegations. If the Notice Recipient seeks to resolve the claims alleged in this Notice without litigation, it may contact Blue Sky Forever's counsel at the address listed below.

It should be noted neither Blue Sky Forever or its counsel can: (1) finalize any settlement until after the expiration of the 60-day Notice period; or (2) speak for the California Attorney General or any District or City attorney in receipt of this Notice. Therefore, while reaching an agreement with Blue Sky Forever will satisfy its claims, the agreement may not satisfy any public prosecutors.

#### IV. GENERAL INFORMATION AND SUMMARY OF PROPOSITION 65

A copy of a summary of Proposition 65's provisions, prepared by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment ("**OEHHA**") is enclosed with the copy of the Notice served on the Notice Recipient for its reference. For further general information concerning Proposition 65, contact OEHHA's Proposition 65 Implementation Office at (916) 445-6900.

#### V. CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Pursuant to Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(d) and Cal. Code. Regs. tit 11, § 3100, a Certificate of Merit is attached hereto. A copy of the Notice and Certificate of Merit is served on the California Attorney General and marked "Attorney General Copy: Contains Official Information Pursuant to Evidence Code Section 1040" with all supporting documentation, as required by Cal. Code. Regs. tit 11, § 3102, attached thereto.

#### VI. CONTACT INFORMATION

Please direct all questions, issues or communications regarding this 60-Day Notice of Violation and its potential resolution to Blue Sky Forever's counsel at the following address:

Blue Sky Forever c/o Kimberly Gates Johnson, Esq. Seven Hills LLP 4 Embarcadero Center, Suite 1400 San Francisco, California 94111 Telephone: (415) 926-7247

Email: kimberly@sevenhillsllp.com

Represented private enforcer's contact information:
Anthony Nguyen, CEO
Blue Sky Forever
1142 West Orangethorpe Avenue
Fullerton, CA 92833

Telephone: (657) 253-8731

Attachments: Certificate of Merit; Proof of Service; Appendix A: The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65): A Summary (to Violator only); and Additional Confidential Supporting Information for Certificate of Merit (to Attorney General only.

Printed on 100% Post-Consumer Recycled Paper.

# **CERTIFICATE OF MERIT**

Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(d)

Re: Blue Sky Forever's Notice of Proposition 65 Violations

- I, Kimberly Gates Johnson, hereby declare and certify:
- 1. This Certificate of Merit accompanies the attached sixty-day notice in which it is alleged the party identified in the notice violated California Health & Safety Code § 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 alleged exposure to and the lack of warnings for the listed chemical that is the subject of the notice.
- 4. Based on the information obtained 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. The copy of this Certificate of Merit served on the Attorney General attaches to it 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., 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: June 7, 2024

Kimberly Gates Johnson

### PROOF OF SERVICE

I, the undersigned, declare under penalty of perjury:

I am over the age of 18 years of age and not a party to this case. Seven Hills LLP's business address is 4 Embarcadero Center, Suite 1400, San Francisco, CA 94111.

On June 7, 2024, I caused to be served the following:

60-DAY NOTICE OF VIOLATION SENT IN COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(d);

APPENDIX A: THE SAFE DRINKING WATER AND TOXIC ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1986 (PROPOSITION 65): A SUMMARY; and CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

XXXX by Certified First Class Mail through the United States Postal Service by placing true and correct copies of the above documents in a sealed envelope, individually addressed to each alleged violator listed below and providing such envelope to a United States Postal Service Representative:

Sheng-Chieh Su, CEO Associated Electrics, Inc. 21062 Bake Pkwy Lake Forest, CA 92630 Associated Electrics, Inc. c/o URS Agents Inc. 7801 Folsom Blvd., #202 Sacramento, CA 95826

On June 7, 2024, I caused to be served true and correct copies of the following documents:

60-DAY NOTICE OF VIOLATION SENT IN COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(d); and CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

XXXX by **First Class Mail** through the United States Postal Service by placing copies of the above documents in a sealed envelope, addressed to each entity on the attached "Service List" and providing such envelope to a United States Postal Representative, with correct postage.

XXXX via Electronic Mail, by sending copies of the above documents, addressed individually, to the Recipients listed on the attached "Electronic Mail Service List".

On June 7, 2024, I caused to be served true and correct copies of the following documents:

60-DAY NOTICE OF VIOLATION SENT IN COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(d); CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; and

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT ATTACHMENTS

XXXX via **Electronic Mail**, by uploading the documents, addressed to California Attorney General at their website address, listed under the "Electronic Upload Service List".

Executed on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of June 2024, at Folsom, California.

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# SERVICE LIST

The Honorable Michael Atwell Alpine County District Attorney P.O. Box 248 Markleeville, CA 96120 The Honorable Michael Ramsey Butte County District Attorney 25 County Center Drive, Suite 245	The Honorable Jackie Lacey Los Angeles County District Attorney 211 West Temple Street, Ste 1200 Los Angeles, CA, 90012 The Honorable Matthew R. Beauchamp Colusa County District Attorney 346 5th Street, Suite 101	The Honorable Todd Riebe Amador County District Attorney 708 Court Street, #202 Jackson, CA 95642 Del Norte County District Attorney 450 H street, Room 171 Crescent City, CA 95531
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Proposition 65 Enforcement Reporting
ATTN: Prop 65 Coordinator
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Oakland, CA 94612-0550
https://oag.ca.gov/prop65/add-60-day-notice