

VOORHEES & BAILEY, LLP
839 Emerson Street
Palo Alto, CA 94301
650-313-2154

60-Day Notice of Violation - California Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(d)

April 4, 2025

Notice Recipients:	Curious Universe (UK) Ltd.; Barnes & Noble, Inc.
Noticing Party:	Dennis Johnson
Covered Products:	Pencil Pouches With PVC Components
Listed Chemical:	Di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP)
Routes of Exposure:	Ingestion; Dermal
Potential Harm:	Birth Defects and Other Reproductive Harm

I. INTRODUCTION

This Sixty-Day Notice of Violation (“Notice”) is provided by Dennis Johnson. Mr. Johnson is a private enforcer acting in the public interest pursuant to California Health & Safety Code section 25249.7(d). Mr. Johnson seeks to promote awareness of exposures to toxic chemicals in products sold and used in California and, if possible, to eliminate such exposures.

This Notice is provided to the alleged violators, Curious Universe (UK) Ltd., and Barnes & Noble, Inc. (the “Notice Recipients”), as well as the California Attorney General’s Office, the District Attorney’s Office for 58 Counties, and the City Attorneys for San Francisco, San Diego, San Jose, and Los Angeles.

The Notice Recipients are hereby given notice that they have violated and continue to violate provisions of California’s Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, which is codified at California Health & Safety Code section 25249.5 et seq. (“Proposition 65”). Specifically, the Notice Recipients have violated and continue to violate the warning requirement of section 25249.6 of the California Health & Safety Code, which provides, “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 clear and reasonable warning to such individual....” The alleged violations that are the subject of this Notice are provided below.

II. ALLEGED VIOLATIONS

Product Type/Category: The specific type or category of products that are causing consumer exposures in violation of Proposition 65, and that are covered by this Notice, are Pencil Pouches With PVC Components (“Covered Products”).

Identified below is a specific example of Covered Products recently purchased and witnessed as being available for purchase or use in California (the “Exemplar Product”). Based on publicly available information, the retailers, distributors, and/or manufacturers of the Exemplar Product are also provided.

The Exemplar Product is identified for the Notice Recipients’ benefit to assist in their investigation of the allegations set forth in this Notice. The Exemplar Product is not meant to be an exhaustive or comprehensive identification of each specific offending product falling within the specific type or category of Covered Products at issue in this Notice. It is the private enforcer’s position that the Notice Recipients are obligated to conduct good-faith investigations into other specific products falling within the type or category of Covered Products that have been manufactured, imported, distributed, sold, shipped, stored, or are otherwise within the Notice Recipients’ custody or control, so as to ensure the requisite toxic warnings were and are provided to California citizens prior to purchase.

<i>Covered Products</i>	<i>Exemplar Product Information</i>
Pencil Pouches With PVC Components	<i>Unicorn & Narwhal Activity Fun Pencil Pouch</i> <i>UPC: 9781787723016</i> Retailer: Barnes & Noble, Inc. (Bakersfield, CA) Manufacturer/Distributor: Curious Universe (UK) Ltd.

Listed Chemical: The alleged violation involves exposures to the Proposition 65-listed chemical Di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP), hereinafter the “Listed Chemical”. On October 24, 2003, the State of California listed DEHP as a chemical known to cause birth defects and other reproductive harm.

Statement of Violations: The Notice Recipients knowingly and intentionally exposed, and continue to knowingly and intentionally expose, consumers within the State of California to DEHP, a chemical known to the State of California to cause birth defects and other reproductive harm, without first giving clear and reasonable warning of this exposure to such individuals. In particular, the Notice Recipients failed to provide a clear and reasonable warning to consumers that the Covered Products expose consumers to DEHP.

Route of Exposure: California citizens, through the act of buying, acquiring or utilizing the Covered Products, are exposed to the Listed Chemical. Children, men, and women of childbearing age ingest the Listed Chemical when they touch and handle the Covered Products, transfer the Listed Chemical from the Covered Products onto their fingers and hands, and

transfer the Listed Chemical from their fingers and hands to their mouths through hand-to-mouth activities that may continue to occur for a significant period after contact with the Covered Product. Children, men, and women of childbearing age are exposed to the Listed Chemical through direct dermal contact when they, among other activities, handle or touch the Covered Products.

Number and Duration of Violations: Each and every sale of a Covered Product to a consumer in California without a clear and reasonable warning is a violation, including transactions made over-the-counter, through the internet, and/or via catalogue by the Notice Recipients and any other sellers of the Covered Products. These violations have been occurring since at least April 4, 2024, as well as every day since the Covered Products were first introduced and sold in the State of California, as far back as April 4, 2022. The violations are ongoing.

III. CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Pursuant to Health & Safety Code § 25249.7(d) and Title 11, California Code of Regulations, section 3100, a Certificate of Merit is attached hereto. A second copy of the entire notice and Certificate of Merit is served on the Attorney General, with all supporting documentation required by Section 3102 attached thereto.

IV. PROPOSITION 65 INFORMATION – A SUMMARY

A summary of Proposition 65 and its implementing regulations, prepared by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, the lead agency designated under Proposition 65, is enclosed with the copy of the Notice served on the Notice Recipients.

V. RESOLUTION OF NOTICED CLAIMS

Based on the allegations set forth in this Notice, Mr. Johnson intends to file a citizen enforcement lawsuit against the Notice Recipients upon the expiration of the sixty-day notice period, provided no public enforcer has commenced and is diligently prosecuting an action to enforce the violations alleged in the Notice.

If the Notice Recipients are interested in resolving this dispute without resorting to time-consuming and expensive litigation, they should contact counsel at the address provided below. It should be noted that no settlement may be finalized before the sixty-day notice period has expired and then only if no public prosecutor has commenced and is diligently prosecuting the alleged violation.

VI. PRESERVATION OF EVIDENCE

This Notice also serves as a demand that the Notice Recipients preserve and maintain all relevant evidence, including all electronic documents and data, pending resolution of this matter. Such relevant evidence includes but is not limited to all documents relating to the

presence or potential presence of the Listed Chemical in the Covered Products; purchase and sales information for the Covered Products; efforts to comply with Proposition 65 with respect to the Covered Products; communications with any person relating to the presence or potential presence of the Listed Chemical in Covered Products; and representative exemplars of each specific model falling within the Covered Products. This demand applies to all relevant evidence for Covered Products sold in the State of California, as far back as April 4, 2022, through the date of any trial of the claims alleged in this Notice.

VII. DEMAND FOR RETAILER, PURSUANT TO 27 C.C.R. 25600.2(g), TO IDENTIFY MANUFACTURER, PRODUCER, PACKAGER, IMPORT, SUPPLIER AND DISTRIBUTOR OF THE COVERED PRODUCTS

Pursuant to 27 C.C.R. 25600.2(g), “[t]he retail seller of a product that may cause a consumer product exposure shall promptly provide the name and contact information for the manufacturer, producer, packager, importer, supplier, and distributor of the product to ... [a]ny person who has served notice under Section 25249.7(d)(1) of the Act alleging that the consumer product causes an exposure that requires a warning under the Act.”


Please accept this Notice as a formal demand for any non-manufacturing seller or distributor receiving this notice to promptly provide the name and contact information for the manufacturer, producer, packager, importer, supplier, and distributor of the product(s) so identified in Section II. This information may and should be communicated in a letter from the retailer delivered via electronic mail to counsel as indicated in Section VIII below.

VIII. CONTACT INFORMATION

Dennis Johnson, whose address is 1618 Alhambra Blvd., # 162022, Sacramento, CA 95816 and whose phone number is (916) 800-2182, has retained me as legal counsel in this matter. Please direct all communications related to this Notice of Violation to the following:

Troy Bailey, Esq.
Voorhees & Bailey, LLP
839 Emerson Street
Palo Alto, CA 94301
troy@voorheesbailey.com

Sincerely,



David Joshua Voorhees
Voorhees & Bailey, LLP
Attorneys for Dennis Johnson

cc: California Attorney General's Office; District Attorney's Office for 58 Counties;
and City Attorneys for San Francisco, San Diego, San Jose, and Los Angeles

Attachments: Certificate of Merit; Proof of Service; The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic
Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65): A Summary (*Curious Universe (UK)*
Ltd., and *Barnes & Noble, Inc., only*); and Confidential Information in Support of
Certificate of Merit (*Attorney General Only*)

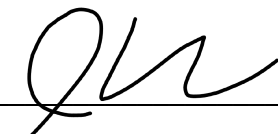
CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Health and Safety Code Section 25249.7(d)

I, David Joshua Voorhees, hereby declare:

1. This Certificate of Merit accompanies the attached sixty-day notice in which it is alleged that the parties identified in the notice have violated Health and Safety Code § 25249.6 by failing to provide clear and reasonable warnings.
2. I am the attorney for the noticing party.
3. I have consulted with one or more persons with relevant and appropriate experience or expertise who has reviewed facts, studies, or other data regarding the alleged exposure to the listed chemical that is the subject of this action.
4. Based on the information obtained through those consultations, and on all 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 the information did not prove that the alleged violators 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 information identified in Health and Safety Code § 25249.7(h)(2), i.e., (1) the identity of the persons consulted with and relied on by the certifier, and (2) certain facts, studies, or other data reviewed by those persons.

Dated: April 4, 2025



David Joshua Voorhees

PROOF OF SERVICE

I, the undersigned, declare under penalty of perjury:

I am over the age of 18 years and not a party to the within action. I am employed in Santa Clara County, California. My business address is 839 Emerson Street, Palo Alto, CA 94301.

On April 4, 2025, I caused to be served the following documents:

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

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; AND

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

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

Barnes & Noble, Inc.
c/o CT Capitol Corporate Services, Inc.
455 Capitol Mall Complex; Suite 217
Sacramento, CA 95814

James Duant or Current CEO
Barnes & Noble, Inc.
33 East 17th Street
New York, NY 10003

On April 4, 2025, I caused to be served the following documents:

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

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; AND

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

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

Current President or CEO
Curious Universe (UK) Limited
The Ice House
124-126 Walcot Street Bath
BA1 5BG United Kingdom

On April 4, 2025, I caused to be served 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 true and correct copies of the above documents in a sealed envelope, addressed to each entity on the attached "U.S. Mail Service List" and providing such envelope to a United States Postal Service Representative, postage prepaid.

XXXX **By Electronic Mail** by sending true and correct copies of the above documents to the electronic notification (Email) address(es) on the attached "Electronic Mail Service List".

On April 4, 2025, I caused to be served 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 **By Electronic Upload** by causing true and correct copies of the above documents to be uploaded to the California Attorney General's website at the web address on the attached "Electronic Upload Service List".

Executed on April 4, 2025, at Palo Alto, California.



David Joshua Voorhees

U.S. Mail Service List

Alpine County District Attorney P.O. Box 248 Markleeville, CA 96120	Los Angeles County District Attorney 211 West Temple Street, Suite 1200 Los Angeles, CA 90012	Solano County District Attorney 675 Texas Street, Suite 4500 Fairfield, CA 94533
Amador County District Attorney 708 Court Street Jackson, CA 95642	Madera County District Attorney 300 South G Street, Suite 300 Madera, CA 93637	Stanislaus County District Attorney 832 12th Street, Suite 300 Modesto, CA 95354
Butte County District Attorney 25 County Center Drive, Suite 245 Oroville, CA 95965	Mendocino County District Attorney P.O. Box 1000 Ukiah, CA 95482	Sutter County District Attorney 463 Second Street, Suite 102 Yuba City, CA 95991
Colusa County District Attorney 346 Fifth Street, Suite 101 Colusa, CA 95932	Modoc County District Attorney 204 S. Court Street, Suite 202 Alturas, CA 96101	Tehama County District Attorney 444 Oak Street, Room L Red Bluff, CA 96080
Del Norte County District Attorney 450 H Street, Room 171 Crescent City, CA 95531	Mono County District Attorney P.O. Box 617 Bridgeport, CA 93517	Trinity County District Attorney P.O. Box 310 Weaverville, CA 96093
Glenn County District Attorney P.O. Box 430 Willows, CA 95988	Office of the City Attorney, Los Angeles James K. Hahn City Hall East 200 North Main Street, 8th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90012	Tuolumne County District Attorney 423 North Washington Street Sonora, CA 95370
Humboldt County District Attorney 825 5th Street, Fourth Floor Eureka, CA 95501	San Benito County District Attorney 419 4th Street Hollister, CA 95023	Yuba County District Attorney 215 Fifth Street Marysville, CA 95901
Imperial County District Attorney 940 West Main Street, Suite 102 El Centro, CA 92243	San Bernardino County District Attorney 303 West 3rd Street, 6th Floor San Bernardino, CA 92415-0502	
Kern County District Attorney 1215 Truxtun Avenue, 4th Floor Bakersfield, CA 93301	Sierra County District Attorney P.O. Box 457 Downieville, CA 95936	
Kings County District Attorney 1400 West Lacey Boulevard Hanford, CA 93230	Siskiyou County District Attorney 311 4th Street Yreka, CA 96097	
Lake County District Attorney 255 North Forbes Street Lakeport, CA 95453	Shasta County District Attorney 1355 West Street Redding, CA 96001	

Electronic Upload Service List

Office of the California Attorney General
Proposition 65 Enforcement Reporting
ATTN: Prop 65 Coordinator
P.O. Box 70550
Oakland, CA 94612-0550
<https://oag.ca.gov/prop65/add-60-day-notice>

Electronic Mail Service List

Pamela Y. Price, District Attorney Alameda County District Attorney 7677 Oakport Street, Suite 650 Oakland, CA 94621 CEPDProp65@acgov.org	Paul E. Zellerbach, District Attorney Riverside County 3072 Orange Street Riverside, CA 92501 Prop65@rivcoda.org	Eric J. Dobroth, Deputy District Attorney San Luis Obispo County County Govt Center Annex, 4th Floor San Luis Obispo, CA 93408 edobroth@co.slo.ca.us
Allison Haley, District Attorney Napa County 1127 First Street, Suite C Napa, CA 94559 CEPD@countyofnapa.org	Tori Verber Salazar, District Attorney San Joaquin County 222 E. Weber Avenue, Room 202 Stockton, CA 95202 DAConsumer.Environmental@sjcda.org	Carla Rodriguez, District Attorney Sonoma County 600 Administration Drive, Room 212J Santa Rosa, CA 95403 ECLD@sonoma-county.org
Alexandra Grayner, Assistant DA San Francisco County 350 Rhode Island Street San Francisco, CA 94103 alexandra.grayner@sfgov.org	Jeffrey S. Rosell, District Attorney Santa Cruz County 701 Ocean Street Santa Cruz, CA 95060 Prop65DA@santacruzcounty.us	Jeannine M. Pacioni, District Attorney Monterey County 1200 Agujito Road Monterey, CA 93940 Prop65DA@co.monterey.ca.us
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.gov	Mark Ankorn, Deputy City Attorney City of San Diego 1200 Third Avenue San Diego, CA 92101 CityAttyProp65@sandiego.gov
Gregory D. Totten, District Attorney Ventura County 800 S Victoria Ave Ventura, CA 93009 daspecialops@ventura.org	Devin Chandler, Executive Assistant Lassen County 2950 Riverside Drive Susanville, CA 96130 dchandler@co.lassen.ca.us	Christopher Dalbey, Deputy District Attorney Santa Barbara County 1112 Santa Barbara St. Santa Barbara, CA 93101 DAProp65@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
Stacey Grassini, Deputy District Attorney Contra Costa County 900 Ward Street Martinez, CA 94553 sgrassini@contracostada.org	Anne Marie Schubert, District Attorney Sacramento County 901 G Street Sacramento, CA 95814 Prop65@sacda.org	Phillip J. Cline, District Attorney Tulare County 221 S Mooney Blvd Visalia, CA 95370 Prop65@co.tulare.ca.us
Barbara Yook, District Attorney Calaveras County 891 Mountain Ranch Road. San Andreas, CA 95249 Prop65Env@co.calaveras.ca.us	Thomas L. Hardy, District Attorney Inyo County 168 North Edwards Street Independence, CA 93526 inyoda@inyocounty.us	Henry Lifton, Deputy City Attorney City of San Francisco 1390 Market Street, 7th Floor San Francisco, CA 94102 Prop65@sfcityattys.org
Kimberly Lewis, District Attorney Merced County 550 W. Main Street Merced, CA 95340 Prop65@countyofmerced.com	Walter W. Wall, District Attorney Mariposa County P.O. Box 730 Mariposa, CA 95338 mcda@mariposacounty.org	Clifford H. Newell, District Attorney Nevada County 201 Commercial Street Nevada City, CA 95959 DA.Prop65@co.nevada.ca.us
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 Street Quincy, CA 95971 davidhollister@countyofplumas.com	Summer Stephan, District Attorney San Diego County 330 W. Broadway Street San Diego, CA 92101 SanDiegoDAProp65@sdca.org
Orange County District Attorney 300 North Flower Street Santa Ana, CA 92703 Prop65Notice@ocdapa.org	Nora V. Frimann, City Attorney Santa Clara County 200 E. Santa Clara Street, 16th Floor San Jose, CA 96113 Proposition65notices@sanjoseca.gov	Lisa A. Smittcamp, District Attorney Fresno County 2100 Tulare Street Fresno, CA 93721 consumerprotection@fresnocountyca.gov
Lori E. Frugoli, Marin County District Attorney 3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 145 San Rafael, CA 94903 consumer@marincounty.gov	Stephen M. Wagstaffe, San Mateo County District Attorney 400 County Center Redwood City, CA 94063 PROP65@smcgov.org	James Clinchard, Assistant District Attorney El Dorado County 778 Pacific Street Placerville, CA 95667 EDCDAPROP65@edcda.us