

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Parties

This Settlement Agreement is entered into by and between EnviroProtect, LLC (“EP”) on the one hand and Yates Gear, Inc. (“YATES”) on the other hand, with YATES and EP each individually referred to as a “Party” and collectively as the “Parties.”

1.2 Introduction and General Allegations.

1.2.1 EP is a limited liability company duly organized and existing in the State of California, which seeks to promote awareness of exposures to toxic chemicals and to improve human health by reducing or eliminating hazardous substances used in consumer products.

1.2.2 EP alleges that YATES employs ten or more persons, and EP alleges that YATES is a person in the course of doing business for purposes of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, California Health and Safety Code section 25249.6 *et seq.* (“Proposition 65”).

1.2.3 EP alleges that YATES imported, sold, and/or distributed for sale in California Covered Products, as defined below, that contain Di-(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (“DEHP”), a chemical pursuant to Proposition 65 listed by the State of California to cause cancer and reproductive toxicity. EP further alleges that YATES failed to provide the health hazard warning required by Proposition 65 for exposures to DEHP from the Covered Products.

1.3 Product Description.

The products covered by this Settlement Agreement are the YATES Double Ended Rope Bags, which were allegedly imported, sold and/or distributed for sale in California by YATES (“Covered Products”).

1.4 60 Day Notice of Violation and Exchange of Information.

On January 19, 2023, EP served YATES, Securityprousa.com (“Securitypro”), and the requisite public enforcement agencies with a 60-Day Notice of Violation (“Notice”), related to the Covered Products, alleging that YATES and Securitypro violated Proposition 65. The Notice alleged that YATES and Securitypro had failed to warn their customers and consumers in California of the health hazards associated with exposures to DEHP from the import, sale and/or distribution of the Covered Products.

EP subsequently provided YATES with test results in EP’s possession concerning its allegations. YATES provided EP with sales data related to the Covered Products. To the best of the Parties’ knowledge, no public enforcer has commenced and is diligently prosecuting the allegations set forth in the Notice.

1.5 No Admission.

The Parties enter into this Settlement Agreement to settle disputed claims between the Parties as set forth below concerning the Parties’ and the Covered Products’ compliance with Proposition 65. Specifically, EP alleges that YATES imported, manufactured, sold or distributed for sale in the state of California, Covered Products which contained DEHP without first providing the clear and reasonable exposure warning required by Proposition 65. YATES denies that such a warning is required under Proposition 65 or any otherwise applicable law.

YATES further denies the material, factual, and legal allegations contained in the Notice and maintains that all of the products that it has imported, manufactured and/or sold and distributed in California, including the Covered Products, have been, and are, in compliance with all laws. Nothing in this Settlement Agreement shall be construed as an admission by YATES of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law, or violation of law, nor shall compliance with this Settlement Agreement constitute or be construed as an admission by YATES of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law, or violation of law, such being specifically denied by YATES. This Section shall not, however, diminish or otherwise affect YATES’s obligations, responsibilities, and duties under this Settlement Agreement.

1.6 **Effective Date.**

For purposes of this Settlement Agreement, the term "Effective Date" shall mean the date the Agreement is fully executed by the Parties.

2. **INJUNCTIVE RELIEF: REFORMULATED PRODUCTS**

2.1 **Reformulation Standard.** Commencing on the Effective Date, and continuing thereafter, Covered Products that YATES imports, manufactures, ships to be sold or offers for sale or purchase in or into California, or sells in California shall be deemed to comply with Proposition 65, and be exempt from any Proposition 65 warning requirements with respect to DEHP if the Products meet the standard of "Reformulated Products." "Reformulated Products" shall mean Covered Products containing less than or equal to 1,000 parts per million (0.1%) DEHP in each Accessible Component when analyzed pursuant to Environmental Protection Agency testing methodologies 3580A and 8270C, CPSC-CH-C1001-09.3 or equivalent methodologies utilized by federal or state agencies for the purpose of determining DEHP content in a solid substance ("Reformulation Standard"). Covered Products, currently in the channels of distribution with distributors and retailers may continue to be sold-through. However, as of the Effective Date, YATES may not distribute or sell new Covered Products in California that are not Reformulated Products or do not contain the warnings set forth in Paragraph 2.3.

2.2 **Warning Option.** Covered Products that are not reformulated or do not meet the Reformulation Standard set forth in Section 2.1 above shall be accompanied by a warning as described in Section 2.3 below. This warning shall only be required as to Covered Products that are sold or shipped out to consumers, retailers, or distributors in California after the Effective Date. No Proposition 65 warning for DEHP shall be required as to any Covered Products that are already in the stream of commerce as of the Effective Date.

2.3 **Warning Language.** Commencing on the Effective Date, YATES shall ensure that any unreformulated Covered Products that it ships to California retailers or for sale in California include a clear and reasonable warning. The warning shall be affixed to the packaging or labeling using language similar to the warnings below:

△ **WARNING:** This product can expose you to chemicals including Di-(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP), which are known to the State of California to cause cancer

and birth defects or other reproductive harm. For more information go to www.P65Warnings.ca.gov.

OR

⚠ **WARNING:** Cancer and Reproductive Harm - www.P65Warnings.ca.gov.

The warning shall be prominently displayed with such conspicuousness as compared with other words, statements, designs, or devices as to render it likely to be read and understood by an ordinary individual under customary conditions before purchase or use. Each warning shall be provided in a manner such that the consumer or user is reasonably likely to understand to which specific Product the warning applies, so as to minimize the risk of consumer confusion. In the event that the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment promulgates one or more regulations requiring or permitting warning text and/or methods of transmission different than those set forth above, YATES shall be entitled to use, at its discretion, such other warning text and/or methods of transmission without being deemed in breach of this Agreement

2.4 **Accessible Component.** The term “Accessible Component” shall mean any component of the Covered Product that could be touched by a person during reasonably foreseeable use.

3. **CIVIL PENALTY PURSUANT TO HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(b)**

YATES shall pay a civil penalty of \$1,000 to be apportioned in accordance with California Health & Safety Code §§25249.12(c) & (d), with 75% of these funds remitted to the State of California's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (“OEHHA”) and the remaining 25% of the penalty remitted to EP. YATES shall issue two separate checks for the penalty payment: (a) one check made payable to the Kawahito Law Group in Trust for the State of California's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (“in Trust for OEHHA”) in the amount of \$750 representing 75% of the initial civil penalty and (b) one check to “Kawahito Law Group in Trust for EnviroProtect” in the amount of \$250, representing 25% of the initial civil penalty. Two separate 1099s shall be issued for the above payments: The first 1099 shall be issued to OEHHA, P.O. Box 4010, Sacramento, CA 95814 (EIN: 68-0284486). The second 1099 shall be issued to Kawahito Law Group. EP shall provide a W-9 for Kawahito Law Group

prior to payment. The payment shall be delivered on or before July 24, 2023 to the following address:

James Kawahito, Esq.
Kawahito Law Group APC
300 Corporate Pointe Ste 340
Culver City, CA 90230

Payment may also be made by wire or ACH or wire transfer. Instructions will be provided separately upon request.

4. REIMBURSEMENT OF FEES AND COSTS

The Parties acknowledge that EP and its counsel offered to resolve this dispute without reaching terms on the amount of fees and costs to be reimbursed to them, thereby leaving any fee reimbursement issue to be resolved after the material terms of the agreement had been settled. The parties reached an accord on the compensation due to EP and its counsel under general contract principles and the private attorney general doctrine codified at California Code of Civil Procedure (CCP) § 1021.5, for all work performed through the mutual execution of this agreement. More specifically, YATES shall pay the total amount of \$16,000 for fees and costs incurred by EP as a result of investigating, bringing this matter to the attention of YATES, and negotiating a settlement. EP shall provide a W-9 for Kawahito Law Group prior to payment. YATES shall wire the funds (instructions will be provided upon request) or make payment by check payable to "Kawahito Law Group APC." The payment shall be delivered on or before July 24, 2023 to the following address:

James Kawahito, Esq.
Kawahito Law Group APC
300 Corporate Pointe Ste 340
Culver City, CA 90230

5. RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS

5.1 Full, Final and Binding Resolution of Proposition 65 Allegations.

EP, on behalf of itself, its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors and/or assignees, releases YATES of any violation of Proposition 65 that was or could have been asserted by EP against YATES, Securitypro, and their parents, subsidiaries, affiliated entities that

are under common ownership, directors, officers, employees, agents, principals, insurers, accountants, representatives, attorneys, predecessors, successors, assignees, licensors, each manufacturer or other entity supplying YATES with the Covered Products, and each entity to which YATES directly or indirectly distributes, ships or sells the Covered Products, including, but not limited to Securitypro, its downstream distributors, wholesalers, customers, retailers, franchisees, cooperative members, and licensees and their owners, directors, officers, employees, agents, principals, insurers, accountants, representatives, attorneys, predecessors, successors, and assignees (collectively "Releasees") for any and all claims based on their alleged or actual failure to warn about alleged exposures to DEHP contained in the Covered Products that were allegedly manufactured, imported, distributed, sold and/or offered for sale by YATES and Securitypro either directly or through the Releasees) in California before the Effective Date. The Release shall also cover any Covered Products that were in the stream of commerce prior to the Effective Date. However, as of the Effective Date, no new Products shall be shipped to or distributed in California that are not Reformulated Products or contain the warnings set forth in Sections 2.2 and 2.3. This release is provided in EP's individual capacity and is not a release on behalf of the public.

In further consideration of the promises and agreements herein contained, EP on behalf of itself, its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors and/or assignees, also hereby waives all of its rights to institute or participate in, directly or indirectly, any form of legal action and releases all claims against YATES and Releasees including, but not limited to Securitypro, that it or they may have including, without limitation, all actions, and causes of action, suits, liabilities, demands, obligations, damages, costs, fines, penalties, losses, expenses, investigative fees, expert fees, and attorneys' fees for any and all claims arising under Proposition 65, and regarding the alleged or actual failure to warn about exposures to DEHP in the Covered Products allegedly manufactured, sold, or distributed for sale before the Effective Date by YATES or Releasees.

5.2 EP's Individual Section 1542 Release of Claims.

EP, in its individual capacity, acknowledges that it is familiar with Section 1542 of Civil Code, which provides as follows:

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

EP, on behalf of itself and its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors, and/or assignees, expressly waives and relinquishes any and all rights and benefits that they may have under, or which may be conferred on them by, the provisions of Civil Code §1542, as well as under any other state or federal statute or common law principle of similar effect, to the fullest extent that they may lawfully waive such rights or benefits pertaining to the released matters

5.3 YATES'S Release of EP.

YATES on behalf of itself, its past and current agents, representatives, attorneys, successors, and/or assignees, hereby waives any and all claims against EP, its attorneys and other representatives, for any and all actions taken or statements made by EP and its attorneys and other representatives, whether in the course of investigating claims or otherwise seeking to enforce Proposition 65 against it in this matter with respect to the Covered Products.

5.4 Public Benefit.

It is YATES's contention that the commitments it has agreed to herein, and actions to be taken by YATES under this Settlement Agreement, would confer a significant benefit to the general public, as set forth in Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5 and Cal. Admin. Code tit. 11, § 3201. As such, it is the intent of YATES that to the extent any other private party initiates any action alleging a violation of Proposition 65 with respect to YATES and/or the Releasees relating to the Covered Products they have manufactured, distributed, sold, or offered for sale in California and that are subject to this Settlement, such private party action would not confer a significant benefit on the general public provided that YATES is in material compliance with this Settlement Agreement.

5.5 Enforcement of Settlement Agreement.

Any party may file suit before the Superior Court of the County of Los Angeles to enforce the terms and conditions contained in this Settlement Agreement. The prevailing party shall be entitled to its reasonable attorneys' fees and costs associated with such enforcement.

6. NON-SHARING/NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

In further consideration of the promises and agreements herein contained, EP on its behalf and not on behalf of the public, and on behalf of itself, and its attorneys hereby agrees not to share or, otherwise disclose the results of, any of the scientific testing data which has been performed on its behalf pertaining to the Covered Product and which forms the basis for the subject claim under Proposition 65 unless required to by law, a valid subpoena, or other legal process. Nothing in this provision shall prevent EP from further disclosing the test results with the Attorney General's office. Moreover, in the event of a breach of the payment provision of this Agreement, this section shall be deemed void *ab initio*.

7. SEVERABILITY

If, subsequent to the execution of this Settlement Agreement, any provision of this Settlement Agreement is deemed by a court to be unenforceable, the validity of the remaining provisions shall not be adversely affected.

8. GOVERNING LAW

The terms of this Settlement Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of California and apply within the State of California.

9. NOTICE

Unless specified herein, all correspondence and notice required to be provided pursuant to this Settlement Agreement shall be in writing and sent by: (a) personal delivery; (b) first-class, registered or certified mail, return receipt requested; (c) a recognized overnight courier; or (d) by email to designated agent of Party indicated below, to the other Party at the following addresses:

For Notices to YATES:

Yates Gear, Inc.
2608 Hartnell Ave. Ste. 6

Redding, CA 96002

with a copy to:

Scott Hengesbach
Murchison & Cumming LLP
801 S. Grand Ave. 9th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017
shengesbach@murchisonlaw.com

For Notices to EP:

EnviroProtect, LLC.
3142 W. 59th Pl.
Los Angeles, CA 90043
Email: enviroprotectca@gmail.com

with a copy to:

James K. Kawahito, Esq.
Kawahito Law Group APC
Attn. EP v. YATES
300 Corporate Pointe Ste 340
Culver City, CA 90230
jkawahito@kawahitolaw.com

Any Party may, from time to time, specify in writing to the other a change of address to which all notices and other communications shall be sent.

10. COUNTERPARTS; FACSIMILE SIGNATURES

This Settlement Agreement may be executed in counterparts and by facsimile or portable document format (PDF) signature, each of which shall be deemed an original, and all of which, when taken together, shall constitute one and the same document.

11. COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 25249.7(f)

EP and its attorneys agree to comply with the reporting form requirements referenced in California Health and Safety Code section 25249.7(f).

12. MODIFICATION


This Settlement Agreement may be modified only by written agreement of the Parties.

13. AUTHORIZATION

The undersigned are authorized to execute this Settlement Agreement on behalf of their respective Parties and have read, understand, and agreed to all of the terms and conditions of this Settlement Agreement.


AGREED TO:

Date: 7/19/23

By: 
EnviroProtect, LLC

AGREED TO:

Date: 7/26/2023

By: 
Yates Gear, Inc.