

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Parties

This Settlement Agreement is entered into by and between EnviroProtect, LLC (“EP”) on the one hand and Blichmann Engineering LLC (“BLE”) on the other hand, with BLE 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 BLE employs ten or more persons, and EP alleges that BLE 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 BLE 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 BLE 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 Anvil Ball Valve Assembly identified in the Notice (defined below) and similar valve products containing a plastic or plasticized handle cover, which were imported, manufactured, sold and/or distributed for sale in California by BLE (“Covered Products”).

1.4 60 Day Notice of Violation and Exchange of Information.

On or about January 19, 2023, EP served BLE, BeverageFactory.com (“Beverage Factory”) and the requisite public enforcement agencies with a 60-Day Notice of Violation (“Notice”), related to the Covered Products, alleging that BLE and Beverage Factory violated Proposition 65. The Notice alleged that BLE and Beverage Factory 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 BLE with test results in EP’s possession concerning its allegations. BLE 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 as set forth below concerning the Parties’ and the Covered Products’ compliance with Proposition 65. Specifically, EP alleges that BLE 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.

BLE and Beverage Factory deny all material, factual, and legal allegations contained in the Notice and maintain that all of the products that they have 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 BLE or Beverage Factory 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 BLE or Beverage Factory of any fact, finding, conclusion, issue of law, or violation of law, such being specifically denied by BLE and Beverage Factory. This Section shall not, however, diminish or otherwise affect BLE’s or Beverage Factory’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 within 90 days following the Effective Date, and continuing thereafter, Covered Products that BLE and/or Beverage Factory 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 90 days from the Effective Date, BLE or Beverage Factory 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 within 90 days of the Effective Date. 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 or shipped within 90 days of the Effective Date.

2.3 Warning Language. Commencing within 90 days of the Effective Date, BLE shall ensure that any Covered Products that it ships to California retailers or for sale in California

that do not comply with the Reformulation Standard include a clear and reasonable warning. The warning shall be included on a label 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, BLE 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)**

BLE shall pay a civil penalty of \$500 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. BLE 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 \$375 representing 75% of the initial civil penalty and (b) one check to “Kawahito Law Group in Trust for EnviroProtect” in the amount of \$125, 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 payment shall be delivered within 10 business days following the Effective Date 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, BLE shall pay the total amount of \$16,500 for fees and costs incurred by EP as a result of investigating, bringing this matter to the attention of BLE, and negotiating a settlement. The total amount of \$16,500 shall be broken into two payments as follows: (a) \$8,500 shall be delivered within 10 business days following the Effective Date to the address provided below (“First Payment”); (b) \$8,000 shall be delivered within 30 days following delivery of the First Payment to the address provided below (“Second Payment”). BLE shall wire the funds (instructions will be provided upon request) or make payment by check payable to “Kawahito Law Group APC.” The First and Second Payments shall be delivered 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 (collectively, "EP Releasers"), and to the broadest extent permissible by law, releases BLE and Beverage Factory, and each of their respective parents, subsidiaries, shareholders, members, affiliated entities that are under common control or ownership, directors, officers, employees, agents, principals, insurers, accountants, representatives, attorneys, predecessors, successors, assignees, licensors, each of their manufacturers and suppliers, and each entity to which any such parties directly or indirectly distributes, ships or sells the Covered Products, including, but not limited to Beverage Factory, BLE or any of their respective 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") from any violation of Proposition 65 that was or could have been asserted by EP against such Releasees, including 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 BLE, Beverage Factory, or any other Releasee (either directly or through the Releasees) in California before the Effective Date. This Release shall also cover all Covered Products that were in the stream of commerce prior to or within 90 days from the Effective Date. However, as of 90 days from 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 by the EP Releasers in their respective individual capacities 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 and the EP Releasers 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 BLE, Beverage Factory and all other Releasees, 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 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 BLE, Beverage Factory or any other Releasee.

Subject to BLE's obligations with respect to the Reimbursement of Fees and Costs set forth in Section 4 above, this Release includes a release of all past, present and future fees and costs, including legal and expert fees and costs, incurred or to be incurred by Releasers in connection with the matters set forth herein.

5.2 BLE'S Release of EP.

BLE 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 in the course of investigating claims or otherwise seeking to enforce Proposition 65 against it in this matter with respect to the Covered Products.

5.3 Public Benefit.

It is BLE's contention that the commitments it has agreed to herein, and actions to be taken by BLE 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 BLE that to the extent any other private party initiates any action alleging a violation of Proposition 65 with respect to BLE 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 BLE is in material compliance with this Settlement Agreement.

5.4 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. However, prior to filing any such suit, the parties shall meet and confer in good faith and attempt

to resolve the matter informally, including providing the prospective defendant with a reasonable opportunity of at least thirty (30) days to cure any alleged violation.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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 BLE:
Blichmann Engineering, LLC

John Blichmann
1600 Canal Road
Lafayette, IN 47904
Email: john@blichmannengineering.com

with a copy to:

Stuart I. Block, Esq.
Stice & Block LLP
2335 Broadway, Suite 201
Oakland, CA 94612
Email: sblock@sticeblock.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. BLE
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.

9. 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.

10. 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).

11. MODIFICATION

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

12. 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: 4/19/23

By: 
EnviroProtect, LLC

AGREED TO:

Date: 4/25/2023

By: 
Blishman Engineering LLC