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PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATURALS LLC, individually and dba
THE GENIUS BRAND

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

**ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH
CENTER, INC., a California non-profit
corporation**

Plaintiff,
vs.

**PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATURALS LLC,
individually and dba THE GENIUS
BRAND; and DOES 1-100**

Defendants.

CASE NO. 24CV098082

**[PROPOSED] AMENDED
STIPULATED CONSENT
JUDGMENT**

Health & Safety Code § 25249.5 *et seq.*

Action Filed: November 1, 2024

Trial Date: None set

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 On November 1, 2024, Plaintiff Environmental Research Center, Inc. (“ERC”),

1 a non-profit corporation, as a private enforcer and in the public interest, initiated this action by
2 filing a Complaint for Injunctive and Declaratory Relief and Civil Penalties (the “Complaint”)
3 and on December 23, 2024, ERC filed a First Amended Complaint for Injunctive and
4 Declaratory Relief and Civil Penalties (“First Amended Complaint”) pursuant to the provisions
5 of California Health and Safety Code section 25249.5 *et seq.* (“Proposition 65”), against
6 Pacific Northwest Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand (“The Genius
7 Brand”), and others. In this action, ERC alleges that a number of products manufactured,
8 distributed, or sold by The Genius Brand contain lead, a chemical listed under Proposition 65
9 as a carcinogen and reproductive toxin, and expose consumers to this chemical at a level
10 requiring a Proposition 65 warning. These products (referred to hereinafter individually as a
11 “Covered Product” or collectively as “Covered Products”) are: (1) The Genius Brand Genius
12 Vegan Protein Vegan Muscle Building Fuel Chocolate; (2) The Genius Brand Genius Pre
13 Mind-to-Muscle Pre Workout Powerhouse Grape Limeade; (3) The Genius Brand Genius
14 Consciousness Super Nootropic Awakening Formula Watermelon; (4) The Genius Brand
15 Genius Protein dual Protein Formula for Lean Muscle Grown & Recovery Vanilla; (5) The
16 Genius Brand Genius Test Advanced Testosterone Optimization Complex; (6) The Genius
17 Brand Genius Protein Dual Protein Formula for Lean Muscle Growth & Recovery Chocolate;
18 (7) The Genius Brand Genius Muscle Supports Muscular Health, Growth and Performance
19 Salted Caramel; (8) The Genius Brand Brilliant Brew Coffee Alternative Cocoa; (9) The
20 Genius Brand Genius Pre Mind-to-Muscle Pre Workout Powerhouse Sour Cherry; and (10)
21 The Genius Brand Genius Greens Superfood Nutrition for Mind & Body.

22 ERC further alleges that the Covered Product called “The Genius Brand Genius Vegan
23 Protein Vegan Muscle Building Fuel Chocolate,” which is also referred to herein as the “PFOA
24 Covered Product,” contains Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA), a chemical listed under
25 Proposition 65 as a carcinogen and reproductive toxin and exposes consumers to this chemical
26 at a level requiring a Proposition 65 warning.

27 **1.2** ERC and The Genius Brand may also hereinafter be referred to individually as a
28 “Party” or collectively as the “Parties.”

1 **1.3** ERC is a 501 (c)(3) California non-profit corporation dedicated to, among other
2 causes, helping safeguard the public from health hazards by reducing the use and misuse of
3 hazardous and toxic chemicals, facilitating a safe environment for consumers and employees,
4 and encouraging corporate responsibility.

5 **1.4** For purposes of this [Proposed] Amended Stipulated Consent Judgment (“Consent
6 Judgment”), the Parties agree that The Genius Brand is a business entity that has employed ten or
7 more persons at all times relevant to this action and qualifies as a “person in the course of doing
8 business” within the meaning of Proposition 65. The Genius Brand manufactures, distributes,
9 and/or sells the Covered Products.

10 **1.5** The First Amended Complaint is based on allegations contained in ERC’s
11 Notices of Violation dated February 2, 2024, July 26, 2024, and October 11, 2024 that were
12 served on the California Attorney General, other public enforcers, and The Genius Brand
13 (“First Three Notices”). True and correct copies of the First Three Notices are attached hereto
14 as **Exhibits A, B, and C** and incorporated herein by reference. More than 60 days have passed
15 since the First Three Notices were served on the Attorney General, public enforcers, and The
16 Genius Brand and no designated governmental entity has filed a Complaint against The Genius
17 Brand with regard to the Covered Products or the alleged violations..

18 **1.6** On February 26, 2025, ERC served a fourth Notice of Violation on the
19 California Attorney General, other public enforcers, and The Genius Brand (“Fourth Notice”).
20 A true and correct copy of the Fourth Notice is attached hereto as **Exhibit D** and incorporated
21 by reference. The Parties stipulate that the First Amended Complaint be deemed amended as of
22 May 8, 2025, to include the products set forth in ERC’s Fourth Notice. This Consent Judgment
23 shall apply to all Covered Products set forth in Paragraph 1.1, effective 60 days after February
24 26, 2025, provided no public enforcer is diligently pursuing the allegations set forth in ERC’s
25 Fourth Notice. On May 8, 2025, more than 60 days will have passed since ERC’s Fourth
26 Notice was served on the Attorney General, public enforcers, and The Genius Brand. The First
27 Three Notices and the Fourth Notice are hereafter collectively referred to as “Notices.”

28 **1.7** ERC’s Notices and First Amended Complaint allege that use of the Covered

1 Products by California consumers exposes them to lead and/or PFOA without first receiving clear
2 and reasonable warnings from The Genius Brand, which is in violation of California Health and
3 Safety Code section 25249.6. The Genius Brand denies all material allegations contained in the
4 Notices and First Amended Complaint.

5 **1.8** The Parties have entered into this Consent Judgment in order to settle,
6 compromise, and resolve disputed claims and thus avoid prolonged and costly litigation.
7 Nothing in this Consent Judgment nor compliance with this Consent Judgment shall constitute
8 or be construed as an admission by any of the Parties or by any of their respective officers,
9 directors, shareholders, employees, agents, parent companies, subsidiaries, divisions,
10 franchisees, licensees, customers, suppliers, distributors, wholesalers, or retailers of any fact,
11 issue of law, or violation of law.

12 **1.9** Except as expressly set forth herein, nothing in this Consent Judgment shall
13 prejudice, waive, or impair any right, remedy, argument, or defense the Parties may have in
14 any current or future legal proceeding unrelated to these proceedings.

15 **1.10** The Effective Date of this Consent Judgment is the date on which it is entered
16 as a Judgment by this Court. The Compliance Date is the date that is 30 days after the
17 Effective Date.

18 **2. JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

19 For purposes of this Consent Judgment and any further court action that may become
20 necessary to enforce this Consent Judgment, the Parties stipulate that this Court has subject matter
21 jurisdiction over the allegations of violations contained in the First Amended Complaint and
22 personal jurisdiction over The Genius Brand as to the acts alleged in the First Amended
23 Complaint, that venue is proper in Alameda County, and that this Court has jurisdiction to enter
24 this Consent Judgment as a full and final resolution of all claims up to and including the
25 Compliance Date that were or could have been asserted in this action based on the facts alleged in
26 the Notices and First Amended Complaint.

27 **3. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF, REFORMULATION, TESTING AND WARNINGS**

28 **3.1** Beginning on the Compliance Date, The Genius Brand shall be permanently

1 enjoined from manufacturing for sale in the State of California, “Distributing into the State of
2 California,” or directly selling in the State of California, any Covered Product that exposes a
3 person to a “Daily Lead Exposure Level” of more than 0.5 micrograms of lead per day and,
4 with respect to the PFOA Covered Product only, any detectible level of PFOA unless it meets
5 the warning requirements under Section 3.2.

6 **3.1.1** As used in this Consent Judgment, the term “Distributing into the State
7 of California” shall mean to directly ship a Covered Product into California for sale in
8 California or to sell a Covered Product to a distributor that The Genius Brand knows or has
9 reason to know will sell the Covered Product in California.

10 **3.1.2** For purposes of this Consent Judgment, the “Daily Lead Exposure
11 Level” shall be measured in micrograms, and shall be calculated using the following formula:
12 micrograms of lead per gram of product, multiplied by grams of product per serving of the
13 product (using the largest serving size appearing on the product label), multiplied by servings
14 of the product per day (using the largest number of recommended daily servings appearing on
15 the label), which equals micrograms of lead exposure per day. If the label contains no
16 recommended daily servings, then the number of recommended daily servings shall be one.

17 **3.1.3** So long as The Genius Brand can provide documentation, if requested in
18 writing by ERC, Covered Products shipped, sold, or Distributed into the State of California by
19 The Genius Brand prior to the Compliance Date are not bound by the injunctive terms set forth
20 in this Section 3, including but not limited to any warning-required detectible levels of PFOA
21 and the Daily Lead Exposure Level and warning and testing requirements, and are instead
22 permitted to be sold as is to California Consumers and are expressly released by Section 8 of this
23 Consent Judgment.

24 **3.2 Clear and Reasonable Warnings**

25 If The Genius Brand is required to provide a warning pursuant to Section 3.1, one of the
26 following warnings must be utilized (“Warning”):

27 **OPTION 1:**

28 **WARNING:** Consuming this product can expose you to chemicals including [lead]
[perfluorooctanoic acid] which is [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/food.

OR

OPTION 2:

WARNING: Risk of [cancer and] reproductive harm from exposure to lead. See www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food.

OR

OPTION 3:

WARNING: Can expose you to lead, a [carcinogen and] reproductive toxicant. See www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/food.

For all options, the Warning shall begin either with the word “**WARNING,**” as indicated above, or the words “**CA WARNING**” or “**CALIFORNIA WARNING,**” in all capital letters and bold print. The Genius Brand shall use the phrase “cancer and” in the Option 1 and Option 2 Warnings or “carcinogen and” in the Option 3 Warning (each phrase referred to individually as a “Cancer Phrase”) if The Genius Brand has reason to believe that the “Daily Lead Exposure Level” is greater than 15 micrograms of lead as determined pursuant to the quality control methodology set forth in Section 3.4, if it knows that there is a detectible level of PFOA in the PFOA Covered Product, or if The Genius Brand has reason to believe that another Proposition 65 chemical is present which may require a cancer warning. As identified in the brackets, the warning shall appropriately reflect whether there is lead, PFOA (for the PFOA Covered Product only), or another chemical that requires a Proposition 65 warning present in each of the Covered Products, but if there is a chemical present at a level that requires a cancer warning, the chemical requiring use of the Cancer Phrase in the Warning shall always be identified.

The Warning shall be securely affixed to or printed upon the label of each Covered Product and it must be set off from other surrounding information and enclosed in a box. For the Option 2 and Option 3 Warnings, the Warning may not appear in a type-size smaller than 6-point type. In addition, for any Covered Product sold over the internet, the Warning shall appear on the Covered Product’s primary product display page or on the checkout page when a California

1 delivery address is indicated for any purchase of any Covered Product. An asterisk or other
2 identifying method must be utilized to identify which products on the checkout page are subject to
3 the Warning. In no event shall any internet or website Warning be contained in or made through a
4 link.

5 The Warning shall be at least the same size as the largest of any other health or safety
6 warnings also appearing on the website or on the label. No statements intended to or likely to have
7 the effect of diminishing the impact of the Warning on the average lay person shall accompany
8 the Warning. Further, no statements may accompany the Warning that state or imply that the
9 source of the listed chemical has an impact on or results in a less harmful effect of the listed
10 chemical.

11 The Genius Brand must display the above Warning with such conspicuousness, as
12 compared with other words, statements or designs on the label, or on its website, if applicable, to
13 render the Warning likely to be read and understood by an ordinary individual under customary
14 conditions of purchase or use of the product. Where a sign or label used to provide the Warning
15 for a Covered Product includes consumer information about the Covered Product in a language
16 other than English, the Warning must also be provided in that language in addition to English.

17 For purposes of this Consent Judgment, the term “label” means a display of written,
18 printed or graphic material that is printed on or affixed to a Covered Product or its immediate
19 container or wrapper.

20 **3.3 Conforming Covered Products**

21 A Conforming Covered Product is a Covered Product for which the “Daily Lead Exposure
22 Level” is no greater than 0.5 micrograms of lead per day and, with respect to the PFOA Covered
23 Product only, does not contain any detectible level of PFOA, all as determined by the exposure
24 methodology set forth in Section 3.1.2 and the quality control methodology described in Section
25 3.4, and that is not known by The Genius Brand to contain other chemicals that violate
26 Proposition 65’s safe harbor thresholds.

27 **3.4 Testing and Quality Control Methodology**

28 **3.4.1** Beginning within one year of the Effective Date, The Genius Brand shall

1 arrange for lead testing of the Covered Products and PFOA testing for the PFOA Covered
2 Product at least once a year for three consecutive years by arranging for testing of three (3)
3 randomly selected samples of each of the Covered Products, in the form intended for sale to
4 the end-user, which The Genius Brand intends to sell or is manufacturing for sale in California,
5 directly selling to a consumer in California or “Distributing into the State of California.” If
6 tests conducted pursuant to this Section demonstrate that no Warning is required for a Covered
7 Product during each of three consecutive years, then the testing requirements of this Section
8 will no longer be required as to that Covered Product. However, if during or after the three-
9 year testing period, The Genius Brand changes ingredient suppliers for any of the Covered
10 Products and/or reformulates any of the Covered Products, The Genius Brand shall test that
11 Covered Product annually for two (2) consecutive years after such change is made.

12 **3.4.2** For purposes of measuring the “Daily Lead Exposure Level,” the highest
13 lead detection result of the three (3) randomly selected samples of the Covered Products will
14 be controlling.

15 **3.4.3** All testing pursuant to this Consent Judgment shall be performed using a
16 laboratory method that complies with the performance and quality control factors appropriate
17 for the method used, including limit of detection and limit of quantification, sensitivity,
18 accuracy and precision that meets the following criteria: Inductively Coupled Plasma-Mass
19 Spectrometry (“ICP-MS”) achieving a limit of quantification for lead of less than or equal to
20 0.005 mg/kg and for PFOA of less than or equal to 0.080 ng/g.

21 **3.4.4** All testing pursuant to this Consent Judgment shall be performed by an
22 independent third party laboratory certified by the California Environmental Laboratory
23 Accreditation Program or an independent third-party laboratory that is registered with the
24 United States Food & Drug Administration.

25 **3.4.5** Nothing in this Consent Judgment shall limit The Genius Brand’s ability
26 to conduct, or require that others conduct, additional testing of the Covered Products, including
27 the raw materials used in their manufacture.

28 **3.4.6** Within sixty (60) days of ERC’s written request, The Genius Brand shall

1 deliver lab reports obtained pursuant to Section 3.4 to ERC. The Genius Brand shall retain all
2 test results and documentation for a period of five years from the date of each test.

3 **3.4.7** The testing and reporting requirements of Section 3.4 do not apply to
4 any Covered Product for which The Genius Brand has provided the Warning specified in
5 Section 3.2 continuously and uninterrupted after the Compliance Date; however, in the event
6 The Genius Brand ceases to provide the Warning specified in Section 3.2 for any Covered
7 Product, The Genius Brand may only do so after it has tested such Covered Product, and The
8 Genius Brand shall be required to comply with the testing requirements of this section
9 beginning immediately after the date the Warning ceases to be provided, unless The Genius
10 Brand can show to the satisfaction of ERC that the cessation in providing the Warning was a
11 temporary error that was resolved when discovered.

12 **3.5** Nothing in Section 3 of this Consent Judgment shall prevent or preclude ERC
13 from obtaining and relying upon its own testing for purposes of enforcement, so long as such
14 testing meets the requirements of Sections 3.4.3 and 3.4.4. Nothing in Section 3.4 of this
15 Consent Judgment is intended by either party to set a precedent for the level of lead or other
16 chemicals that is permissible in consumer products under Proposition 65.

17 **4. SETTLEMENT PAYMENT**

18 **4.1** In full satisfaction of all potential civil penalties, additional settlement
19 payments, attorney's fees, and costs, The Genius Brand shall make a total payment of
20 \$125,000.00 ("Total Settlement Amount") to ERC within 10 business days of the Effective
21 Date ("Due Date"). The Genius Brand shall make this payment by wire transfer to ERC's
22 account, for which ERC will give The Genius Brand the necessary account information. The
23 Total Settlement Amount shall be apportioned as follows:

24 **4.2** \$16,000.00 shall be considered a civil penalty pursuant to California Health and
25 Safety Code section 25249.7(b)(1). ERC shall remit 75% (\$12,000.00) of the civil penalty to
26 the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment ("OEHHA") for deposit in the Safe
27 Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Fund in accordance with California Health and Safety
28 Code section 25249.12(c). ERC will retain the remaining 25% (\$4,000.00) of the civil penalty.

1 **4.3** \$7,166.44 shall be distributed to ERC as reimbursement to ERC for reasonable
2 costs incurred in bringing this action.

3 **4.4** \$10,781.10 shall be distributed to ERC as an Additional Settlement Payment
4 (“ASP”), which shall be subject to the Court’s ongoing judicial oversight pursuant to
5 California Code of Regulations, title 11, section 3204. ERC will utilize the ASP for activities
6 that address the same public harm as allegedly caused by Defendant in this matter. These
7 activities are detailed below and support ERC’s overarching goal of reducing and/or
8 eliminating hazardous and toxic chemicals in dietary supplement products in California. ERC’s
9 activities have had, and will continue to have, a direct and primary effect within the State of
10 California because California consumers will be benefitted by the reduction and/or elimination
11 of exposure to lead in dietary supplements and/or by providing clear and reasonable warnings
12 to California consumers prior to ingestion of the products.

13 Based on a review of past years’ actual budgets, ERC is providing the following list of
14 activities ERC engages in to protect California consumers through Proposition 65 citizen
15 enforcement, along with a breakdown of how ASP funds will be utilized to facilitate those
16 activities: (1) ENFORCEMENT (up to 65-80%): obtaining, shipping, analyzing, and testing
17 dietary supplement products that may contain lead and are sold to California consumers. This
18 work includes continued monitoring and enforcement of past consent judgments and
19 settlements to ensure companies are in compliance with their obligations thereunder, with a
20 specific focus on those judgments and settlements concerning lead. This work also includes
21 investigation of new companies that ERC does not obtain any recovery through settlement or
22 judgment; (2) VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE PROGRAM (up to 10-20%): maintaining
23 ERC’s Voluntary Compliance Program by acquiring products from companies, developing and
24 maintaining a case file, testing products from these companies, providing the test results and
25 supporting documentation to the companies, and offering guidance in warning or implementing
26 a self-testing program for lead in dietary supplement products; and (3) “GOT LEAD”
27 PROGRAM (up to 5%): maintaining ERC’s “Got Lead?” Program which reduces the numbers
28 of contaminated products that reach California consumers by providing access to free testing

1 for lead in dietary supplement products (Products submitted to the program are screened for
2 ingredients which are suspected to be contaminated, and then may be purchased by ERC,
3 catalogued, sent to a qualified laboratory for testing, and the results shared with the consumer
4 that submitted the product).

5 ERC shall be fully accountable in that it will maintain adequate records to document
6 and will be able to demonstrate how the ASP funds will be spent and can assure that the funds
7 are being spent only for the proper, designated purposes described in this Consent Judgment.
8 ERC shall provide the Attorney General, within thirty days of any request, copies of
9 documentation demonstrating how such funds have been spent.

10 **4.5** \$35,460.00 shall be distributed to Michael Freund & Associates as
11 reimbursement of ERC's attorney fees, while \$55,592.46 shall be distributed to ERC for its in-
12 house legal fees. Except as explicitly provided herein, each Party shall bear its own fees and
13 costs.

14 **4.6** In the event that The Genius Brand fails to remit the Total Settlement Amount
15 owed under Section 4 of this Consent Judgment on or before the Due Date, The Genius Brand
16 shall be deemed to be in material breach of its obligations under this Consent Judgment. ERC
17 shall provide written notice of the delinquency to The Genius Brand via electronic mail. If The
18 Genius Brand fails to deliver the Total Settlement Amount within five (5) days from the
19 written notice, the Total Settlement Amount shall accrue interest at the statutory judgment
20 interest rate provided in the California Code of Civil Procedure section 685.010, and The
21 Genius Brand shall forfeit any release provisions in Section 8 that are for the benefit of The
22 Genius Brand and the Released Parties (as defined in Section 8.1) until such time as the Total
23 Settlement Amount is paid in full. Additionally, The Genius Brand agrees to pay ERC's
24 reasonable attorneys' fees and costs for any efforts to collect the payment due under this
25 Consent Judgment.

26 **5. MODIFICATION OF CONSENT JUDGMENT**

27 **5.1** This Consent Judgment may be modified only as to injunctive terms (i) by
28 written stipulation of the Parties and upon entry by the Court of a modified consent judgment

1 or (ii) by motion of either Party pursuant to Section 5.3 and upon entry by the Court of a
2 modified consent judgment.

3 **5.2** If The Genius Brand seeks to modify this Consent Judgment under Section 5.1,
4 then The Genius Brand must provide written notice to ERC of its intent (“Notice of Intent”). If
5 ERC seeks to meet and confer regarding the proposed modification in the Notice of Intent, then
6 ERC must provide written notice to The Genius Brand within thirty (30) days of receiving the
7 Notice of Intent. If ERC notifies The Genius Brand in a timely manner of ERC’s intent to meet
8 and confer, then the Parties shall meet and confer in good faith as required in this Section. The
9 Parties shall meet in person, via remote meeting, or by telephone within thirty (30) days of
10 ERC’s notification of its intent to meet and confer. Within thirty (30) days of such meeting, if
11 ERC disputes the proposed modification, ERC shall provide to The Genius Brand a written
12 basis for its position. The Parties shall continue to meet and confer for an additional thirty (30)
13 days in an effort to resolve any remaining disputes. Should it become necessary, the Parties
14 may agree in writing to different deadlines for the meet-and-confer period.

15 **5.3** In the event that The Genius Brand initiates or otherwise requests a modification
16 under Section 5.1, and the meet and confer process leads to a joint motion or joint application
17 for a modification of the Consent Judgment, The Genius Brand shall reimburse ERC its costs
18 and reasonable attorney’s fees for the time spent in the meet-and-confer process and filing and
19 arguing the motion or application.

20 **6. RETENTION OF JURISDICTION, ENFORCEMENT OF CONSENT**
21 **JUDGMENT**

22 **6.1** This Court shall retain jurisdiction of this matter to enforce, modify, or
23 terminate this Consent Judgment.

24 **6.2** If ERC alleges that any Covered Product fails to qualify as a Conforming
25 Covered Product (for which ERC alleges that no Warning has been provided), then ERC shall
26 inform The Genius Brand in a reasonably prompt manner of its test results, including
27 information sufficient to permit The Genius Brand to identify the Covered Products at issue.
28 The Genius Brand shall, within thirty (30) days following such notice, provide ERC with

1 testing information, from an independent third-party laboratory meeting the requirements of
2 Sections 3.4.3 and 3.4.4, demonstrating The Genius Brand’s compliance with the Consent
3 Judgment. The Parties shall first attempt to resolve the matter prior to ERC taking any further
4 legal action.

5 **7. APPLICATION OF CONSENT JUDGMENT**

6 This Consent Judgment may apply to, be binding upon, and benefit the Parties and their
7 respective officers, directors, shareholders, employees, agents, parent companies, subsidiaries,
8 divisions, franchisees, licensees, customers (excluding private labelers), distributors, wholesalers,
9 retailers, predecessors, successors, and assigns. This Consent Judgment shall have no
10 application to any Covered Product that is distributed or sold exclusively outside the State of
11 California and that is not used by California consumers.

12 **8. BINDING EFFECT, CLAIMS COVERED AND RELEASED**

13 **8.1** This Consent Judgment is a full, final, and binding resolution between ERC, on
14 behalf of itself and in the public interest, and The Genius Brand and its respective officers,
15 directors, shareholders, employees, agents, parent companies, subsidiaries, divisions, suppliers,
16 franchisees, licensees, customers (not including private label customers of The Genius Brand),
17 distributors, wholesalers, retailers, and all other upstream and downstream entities in the
18 distribution chain of any Covered Product, and the predecessors, successors, and assigns of any
19 of them (collectively, “Released Parties”).

20 **8.2** ERC, acting in the public interest, releases the Released Parties from any and all
21 claims for violations of Proposition 65 up to and including the Compliance Date based on
22 exposure to PFOA in the PFOA Covered Product and lead from the Covered Products as set
23 forth in the Notices of Violation. ERC, on behalf of itself only, hereby fully releases and
24 discharges the Released Parties from any and all claims, actions, causes of action, suits,
25 demands, liabilities, damages, penalties, fees, costs, and expenses asserted, or that could have
26 been asserted from the handling, use, or consumption of the Covered Products, as to any
27 alleged violation of Proposition 65 or its implementing regulations arising from the failure to
28 provide Proposition 65 warnings on the Covered Products regarding lead, and on the PFOA

1 Covered Product regarding PFOA, up to and including the Compliance Date.

2 **8.3** ERC on its own behalf only, and The Genius Brand on its own behalf only,
3 further waive and release any and all claims they may have against each other for all actions or
4 statements made or undertaken in the course of seeking or opposing enforcement of
5 Proposition 65 in connection with the Notices and First Amended Complaint up to and
6 including the Compliance Date, provided, however, that nothing in Section 8 shall affect or
7 limit any Party's right to seek to enforce the terms of this Consent Judgment.

8 **8.4** It is possible that other claims not known to the Parties, arising out of the facts
9 alleged in the Notices and First Amended Complaint, and relating to the Covered Products,
10 will develop or be discovered. ERC on behalf of itself only, and The Genius Brand on behalf
11 of itself only, acknowledge that this Consent Judgment is expressly intended to cover and
12 include all such claims up to and including the Compliance Date, including all rights of action
13 therefore. ERC and The Genius Brand acknowledge that the claims released in Sections 8.2
14 and 8.3 above may include unknown claims and nevertheless waive California Civil Code
15 section 1542 as to any such unknown claims. California Civil Code section 1542 reads as
16 follows:

17 A GENERAL RELEASE DOES NOT EXTEND TO CLAIMS THAT THE
18 CREDITOR OR RELEASING PARTY DOES NOT KNOW OR SUSPECT TO
19 EXIST IN HIS OR HER FAVOR AT THE TIME OF EXECUTING THE RELEASE
20 AND THAT, IF KNOWN BY HIM OR HER, WOULD HAVE MATERIALLY
21 AFFECTED HIS OR HER SETTLEMENT WITH THE DEBTOR OR RELEASED
22 PARTY.

21 ERC on behalf of itself only, and The Genius Brand on behalf of itself only, acknowledge and
22 understand the significance and consequences of this specific waiver of California Civil Code
23 section 1542.

24 **8.5** Compliance with the terms of this Consent Judgment shall be deemed to
25 constitute compliance with Proposition 65 by any of the Released Parties regarding alleged
26 exposures to lead in the Covered Products and PFOA in the PFOA Covered Product as set
27 forth in the Notices and First Amended Complaint.

28 **8.6** Nothing in this Consent Judgment is intended to apply to any occupational or

1 environmental exposures arising under Proposition 65, nor shall it apply to any of The Genius
2 Brand's products other than the Covered Products.

3 **9. SEVERABILITY OF UNENFORCEABLE PROVISIONS**

4 In the event that any of the provisions of this Consent Judgment are held by a court to be
5 unenforceable, the validity of the remaining enforceable provisions shall not be adversely
6 affected.

7 **10. GOVERNING LAW**

8 The terms and conditions of this Consent Judgment shall be governed by and construed in
9 accordance with the laws of the State of California.

10 **11. PROVISION OF NOTICE**

11 All notices required to be given to either Party to this Consent Judgment by the other shall
12 be in writing and sent to the following agents listed below via first-class mail or via electronic
13 mail where required. Courtesy copies via email may also be sent.

14 **FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH CENTER, INC.:**

15 Chris Heptinstall, Executive Director
16 Environmental Research Center
17 3111 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 400
18 San Diego, CA 92108
19 Ph: (619) 500-3090
20 Email: chris.heptinstall@erc501c3.org

21 With a copy to:
22 Michael Freund
23 Michael Freund & Associates
24 1919 Addison Street, Suite 104
25 Berkeley, CA 94704
26 Telephone: (510) 499-1992
27 Email: freund1@aol.com

28 **FOR PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATURALS LLC, individually and dba THE GENIUS BRAND:**

Gary Gastel, President
The Genius Brand
1720 Peachtree Industrial Blvd, Suite A
Buford, GA 30518
Email: gary@thegeniusbrand.com

1 With a copy to:
2 Kevin J. Gillispie
3 David W. Afahame
4 Quintairos, Prieto, Wood & Boyer, P.A.
5 1001 Galaxy Way, Suite 312
6 Concord, CA 94520
7 Ph: 925-466-4230
8 Email: kevin.gillispie@qpwbllaw.com
9 david.afahame@qpwbllaw.com

10 **12. COURT APPROVAL**

11 **12.1** Upon execution of this Consent Judgment by the Parties, ERC shall notice a
12 Motion for Court Approval. The Parties shall use their best efforts to support entry of this
13 Consent Judgment.

14 **12.2** If the California Attorney General objects to any term in this Consent Judgment,
15 the Parties shall use their best efforts to resolve the concern in a timely manner, and if possible
16 prior to the hearing on the motion.

17 **12.3** If this Consent Judgment is not approved by the Court, it shall be void and have
18 no force or effect.

19 **13. EXECUTION AND COUNTERPARTS**

20 This Consent Judgment may be executed in counterparts, which taken together shall be
21 deemed to constitute one document. A facsimile or .pdf signature shall be construed to be as valid
22 as the original signature.

23 **14. DRAFTING**

24 The terms of this Consent Judgment have been reviewed by the respective counsel for
25 each Party prior to its signing, and each Party has had an opportunity to fully discuss the terms
26 and conditions with legal counsel. The Parties agree that, in any subsequent interpretation and
27 construction of this Consent Judgment, no inference, assumption, or presumption shall be drawn,
28 and no provision of this Consent Judgment shall be construed against any Party, based on the fact
that one of the Parties and/or one of the Parties' legal counsel prepared and/or drafted all or any
portion of the Consent Judgment. It is conclusively presumed that all of the Parties participated
equally in the preparation and drafting of this Consent Judgment.

1 **15. GOOD FAITH ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE DISPUTES**

2 If a dispute arises with respect to either Party's compliance with the terms of this Consent
3 Judgment entered by the Court, the Parties shall meet and confer in person, via remote meeting,
4 by telephone, and/or in writing and endeavor to resolve the dispute in an amicable manner. No
5 action or motion may be filed in the absence of such a good faith attempt to resolve the dispute
6 beforehand.

7 **16. ENFORCEMENT**

8 ERC may, by motion or order to show cause before the Superior Court of Alameda
9 County, enforce the terms and conditions contained in this Consent Judgment. In any action
10 brought by ERC to enforce this Consent Judgment, ERC may seek whatever fines, costs,
11 penalties, or remedies as are provided by law for failure to comply with the Consent Judgment.
12 To the extent the failure to comply with the Consent Judgment constitutes a violation of
13 Proposition 65 or other laws, ERC shall not be limited to enforcement of this Consent
14 Judgment, but may seek in another action whatever fines, costs, penalties, or remedies as are
15 provided by law for failure to comply with Proposition 65.

16 **17. ENTIRE AGREEMENT, AUTHORIZATION**

17 **17.1** This Consent Judgment contains the sole and entire agreement and
18 understanding of the Parties with respect to the entire subject matter herein, including any and
19 all prior discussions, negotiations, commitments, and understandings related thereto. No
20 representations, oral or otherwise, express or implied, other than those contained herein have
21 been made by any Party. No other agreements, oral or otherwise, unless specifically referred to
22 herein, shall be deemed to exist or to bind any Party.

23 **17.2** Each signatory to this Consent Judgment certifies that he or she is fully
24 authorized by the Party he or she represents to stipulate to this Consent Judgment.

25 **18. REQUEST FOR FINDINGS, APPROVAL OF SETTLEMENT AND ENTRY OF**
26 **CONSENT JUDGMENT**

27 This Consent Judgment has come before the Court upon the request of the Parties. The
28 Parties request the Court to fully review this Consent Judgment and, being fully informed

1 regarding the matters which are the subject of this action, to:

2 (1) Find that the terms and provisions of this Consent Judgment represent a fair and
3 equitable settlement of all matters raised by the allegations of the First Amended Complaint that
4 the matter has been diligently prosecuted, and that the public interest is served by such settlement;
5 and

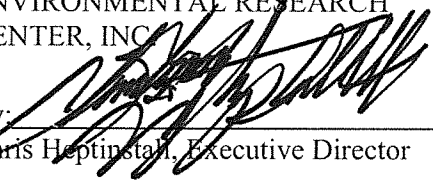
6 (2) Make the findings pursuant to California Health and Safety Code section
7 25249.7(f)(4), approve the Settlement, and approve this Consent Judgment.

8 (3) Retain jurisdiction, pursuant to Section 664.6 of the Code of Civil Procedure, after
9 the Consent Judgment is entered in order to enforce, modify, or terminate this Consent Judgment.

10 **IT IS SO STIPULATED:**


11 Dated: 5/29/, 2025

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH
CENTER, INC.

12
13 By: 
14 Chris Heptinstall, Executive Director

15 Dated: May 29th, 2025

PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATURALS
LLC, individually and dba THE GENIUS
BRAND

16
17 
18 By: Gary Gastel
19 Its: President

20 ///

21 ///

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23 ///

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26 ///


27 ///

28 ///

1 **APPROVED AS TO FORM:**


2
3 Dated: May 29, 2025

MICHAEL FREUND & ASSOCIATES

4
5 By: 
6 Michael Freund
7 Attorney for Plaintiff Environmental
8 Research Center, Inc.

9 Dated: May 29, 2025

QUINTAIROS, PRIETO, WOOD &
BOYER, P.A.

10
11 By: 
12 David W. Afahame
13 Attorney for Pacific Northwest Naturals
14 LLC, individually and dba The Genius
15 Brand
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IT IS SO ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED.

Judge of the Superior Court

EXHIBIT A

Michael Freund & Associates

1919 Addison Street, Suite 105
Berkeley, CA 94704
Voice: 510.540.1992 • Fax: 510.371.0885

Michael Freund, Esq.

February 2, 2024

**NOTICE OF VIOLATION OF
CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE SECTION 25249.5 ET SEQ.
(PROPOSITION 65)**

Dear Alleged Violators and the Appropriate Public Enforcement Agencies:

I represent Environmental Research Center, Inc. ("ERC"), 3111 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 400, San Diego, CA 92108; Tel. (619) 500-3090. ERC's Executive Director is Chris Heptinstall. ERC is a California non-profit corporation dedicated to, among other causes, helping safeguard the public from health hazards by bringing about a reduction in the use and misuse of hazardous and toxic chemicals, facilitating a safe environment for consumers and employees, and encouraging corporate responsibility.

ERC has identified violations of California's Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 ("Proposition 65"), which is codified at California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*, with respect to the products identified below. These violations have occurred and continue to occur because the alleged Violators identified below failed to provide required clear and reasonable warnings with these products. This letter serves as a notice of these violations to the alleged Violators and the appropriate public enforcement agencies. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 25249.7(d), ERC intends to file a private enforcement action in the public interest 60 days after effective service of this notice unless the public enforcement agencies have commenced and are diligently prosecuting an action to rectify these violations.

General Information about Proposition 65. A copy of a summary of Proposition 65, prepared by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, is enclosed with this letter served to the alleged Violators identified below.

Alleged Violators. The names of the companies covered by this notice that violated Proposition 65 (hereinafter the "Violators") are:

**PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand
Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC**

Consumer Products and Listed Chemical. The products that are the subject of this notice and the chemical in those products identified as exceeding allowable levels are:

- 1. The Genius Brand Genius Vegan Protein Vegan Muscle Building Fuel Chocolate - Lead**
- 2. The Genius Brand Genius Pre Mind-to-Muscle Pre Workout Powerhouse Grape Limeade - Lead**
- 3. The Genius Brand Genius Consciousness Super Nootropic Awakening Formula Watermelon - Lead**

On February 27, 1987, the State of California officially listed lead as a chemical known to cause developmental toxicity, and male and female reproductive toxicity. On October 1, 1992, the State of California officially listed lead and lead compounds as chemicals known to cause cancer.

It should be noted that ERC may continue to investigate other products that may reveal further violations and result in subsequent notices of violations.

Route of Exposure. The consumer exposures that are the subject of this notice result from the recommended use of these products. Consequently, the route of exposure to this chemical has been and continues to be through ingestion.

Approximate Time Period of Violations. Ongoing violations have occurred every day since at least February 2, 2021, as well as every day since the products were introduced into the California marketplace, and will continue every day until clear and reasonable warnings are provided to product purchasers and users or until this known toxic chemical is either removed from or reduced to allowable levels in the products. Proposition 65 requires that a clear and reasonable warning be provided prior to exposure to the identified chemical. The method of warning should be a warning that appears on the product label. The Violators violated Proposition 65 because they failed to provide persons ingesting these products with appropriate warnings that they are being exposed to this chemical.

Consistent with the public interest goals of Proposition 65 and a desire to have these ongoing violations of California law quickly rectified, ERC is interested in seeking a constructive resolution of this matter that includes an enforceable written agreement by the Violators to: (1) reformulate the identified products so as to eliminate further exposures to the identified chemical, or provide appropriate warnings on the labels of these products; (2) pay an appropriate civil penalty; and (3) provide clear and reasonable warnings compliant with Proposition 65 to all persons located in California who purchased the above products in the last three years. Such a resolution will prevent further unwarned consumer exposures to the identified chemical, as well as an expensive and time-consuming litigation.

ERC has retained me as legal counsel in connection with this matter. **Please direct all communications regarding this Notice of Violation to my attention at the law office address and telephone number indicated on the letterhead or at freund1@aol.com.**

Sincerely,



Michael Freund

Attachments

Certificate of Merit

Certificate of Service

OEHHA Summary (to PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand, Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC and their Registered Agents for Service of Process only)

Additional Supporting Information for Certificate of Merit (to AG only)

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

**Re: Environmental Research Center, Inc.’s Notice of Proposition 65 Violations by PacificNorthwest
Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand and Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC**

I, Michael Freund, declare:

1. This Certificate of Merit accompanies the attached 60-day notice in which it is alleged that the parties identified in the notice violated California Health & Safety Code Section 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 exposure to the listed chemical that is the subject of the notice.

4. Based on the information obtained through those consultants, 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 Violators will be able to establish any of the affirmative defenses set forth in the statute.

5. Along with the copy of this Certificate of Merit served on the Attorney General is attached additional 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., (1) 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: February 2, 2024

Michael Freund

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE PURSUANT TO 27 CCR § 25903

I, the undersigned, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the following is true and correct:

I am a citizen of the United States and over the age of 18 years of age. My business address is 306 Joy Street, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia 30742. I am a resident or employed in the county where the mailing occurred. The envelope or package was placed in the mail at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

On February 2, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; “THE SAFE DRINKING WATER AND TOXIC ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1986 (PROPOSITION 65): A SUMMARY”** on the following parties by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties listed below and depositing it in a U.S. Postal Service Office with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by Certified Mail:

Current President or CEO
PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and
dba The Genius Brand and Catalyst Nutraceuticals,
LLC
1720 Peachtree Industrial Blvd, Ste A
Buford, GA 30518

Corporation Service Company
(Registered Agent for Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC)
2 Sun Court, Ste 400
Peachtree Corners, GA 30092

Corporation Service Company
(PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually
and dba The Genius Brand)
300 Deschutes Way SW, Ste 208 MC-CSC1
Tumwater, WA 98501

On February 2, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF MERIT AS REQUIRED BY CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.7(d)(1)** were served on the following party when a true and correct copy thereof was uploaded on the California Attorney General’s website, which can be accessed at <https://oag.ca.gov/prop65/add-60-day-notice>:

Office of the California Attorney General
Prop 65 Enforcement Reporting
1515 Clay Street, Suite 2000
Oakland, CA 94612-0550

On February 2, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** were served on the following parties when a true and correct copy thereof was sent via electronic mail to each of the parties listed below:

Pamela Y. Price, District Attorney
Alameda County
7677 Oakport Street, Suite 650
Oakland, CA 94621
CEPDProp65@acgov.org

Stacey Grassini, Deputy District Attorney
Contra Costa County
900 Ward Street
Martinez, CA 94553
sgrassini@contracostada.org

Barbara Yook, District Attorney
Calveras County
891 Mountain Ranch Road
San Andreas, CA 95249
Prop65Env@co.calaveras.ca.us

James Clinchard, Assistant District Attorney
El Dorado County
778 Pacific Street
Placerville, CA 95667
EDCDAPROP65@edcda.us

Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

February 2, 2024

Page 5

Lisa A. Smittcamp, District Attorney
Fresno County
2100 Tulare Street
Fresno, CA 93721
consumerprotection@fresnocountyca.gov

Thomas L. Hardy, District Attorney
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168 North Edwards Street
Independence, CA 93526
inyoda@inyocounty.us

Devin Chandler, Program Coordinator
Lassen County
2950 Riverside Dr
Susanville, CA 96130
dchandler@co.lassen.ca.us

Lori E. Frugoli, District Attorney
Marin County
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 145
San Rafael, CA 94903
consumer@marincounty.org

Walter W. Wall, District Attorney
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P.O. Box 730
Mariposa, CA 95338
mcda@mariposacounty.org

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Merced, CA 95340
Prop65@countyofmerced.com

Jeannine M. Pacioni, District Attorney
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Nevada City, CA 95959
DA.Prop65@co.nevada.ca.us

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Prop65notice@ocdapa.org

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davidhollister@countyofplumas.com

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Sacramento, CA 95814
Prop65@sacda.org

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San Diego, CA 92101
SanDiegoDAProp65@sdca.org

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1200 Third Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101
CityAttyProp65@sandiego.gov

Alexandra Grayner, Assistant District Attorney
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350 Rhode Island Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
Alexandra.grayner@sfgov.org

Henry Lifton, Deputy City Attorney
San Francisco City Attorney
1390 Market Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102
Prop65@sfcityattorney.org

Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

February 2, 2024

Page 6

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San Joaquin County
222 E. Weber Avenue, Room 202
Stockton, CA 95202
DAConsumer.Environmental@sjcda.org

Eric J. Dobroth, Deputy District Attorney
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edobroth@co.slo.ca.us

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Santa Barbara, CA 93101
DAProp65@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

Bud Porter, Supervising Deputy District Attorney
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San Jose, CA 95110
EPU@da.sccgov.org

Nora V. Frimann, City Attorney
Santa Clara City Attorney
200 E. Santa Clara Street, 16th Floor
San Jose, CA 96113
Proposition65notices@sanjoseca.gov

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Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Prop65DA@santacruzcounty.us

Jill Ravitch, District Attorney
Sonoma County
600 Administration Dr
Sonoma, CA 95403
Jeannie.Barnes@sonoma-county.org

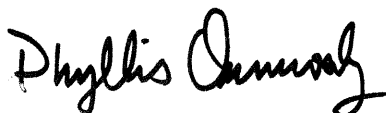
Phillip J. Cline, District Attorney
Tulare County
221 S Mooney Blvd
Visalia, CA 95370
Prop65@co.tulare.ca.us

Gregory D. Totten, District Attorney
Ventura County
800 S Victoria Ave
Ventura, CA 93009
daspecialops@ventura.org

Jeff W. Reisig, District Attorney
Yolo County
301 Second Street
Woodland, CA 95695
cfepd@yolocounty.org

On February 2, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATION, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** on each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto, and depositing it at a U.S. Postal Service Office with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by First Class Mail.

Executed on February 2, 2024, in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.



Phyllis Dunwoody

Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

February 2, 2024

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Service List

District Attorney, Alpine
County
P.O. Box 248
Markleeville, CA 96120

District Attorney, Amador
County
708 Court Street, Suite 202
Jackson, CA 95642

District Attorney, Butte
County
25 County Center Drive, Suite
245
Oroville, CA 95965

District Attorney, Colusa
County
310 6th St
Colusa, CA 95932

District Attorney, Del Norte
County
450 H Street, Room 171
Crescent City, CA 95531

District Attorney, Glenn
County
Post Office Box 430
Willows, CA 95988

District Attorney, Humboldt
County
825 5th Street 4th Floor
Eureka, CA 95501

District Attorney, Imperial
County
940 West Main Street, Ste 102
El Centro, CA 92243

District Attorney, Kern County
1215 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

District Attorney, Kings
County
1400 West Lacey Boulevard
Hanford, CA 93230

District Attorney, Lake County
255 N. Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

District Attorney, Los Angeles
County
Hall of Justice
211 West Temple St., Ste 1200
Los Angeles, CA 90012

District Attorney, Madera
County
209 West Yosemite Avenue
Madera, CA 93637

District Attorney, Mendocino
County
Post Office Box 1000
Ukiah, CA 95482

District Attorney, Modoc
County
204 S Court Street, Room 202
Alturas, CA 96101-4020

District Attorney, Mono
County
Post Office Box 617
Bridgeport, CA 93517

District Attorney, San Benito
County
419 Fourth Street, 2nd Floor
Hollister, CA 95023

District Attorney, San
Bernardino County
303 West Third Street
San Bernadino, CA 92415

District Attorney, San Mateo
County
400 County Ctr., 3rd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063

District Attorney, Shasta
County
1355 West Street
Redding, CA 96001

District Attorney, Sierra
County
Post Office Box 457
100 Courthouse Square, 2nd
Floor
Downieville, CA 95936

District Attorney, Siskiyou
County
Post Office Box 986
Yreka, CA 96097

District Attorney, Solano
County
675 Texas Street, Ste 4500
Fairfield, CA 94533

District Attorney, Stanislaus
County
832 12th Street, Ste 300
Modesto, CA 95354

District Attorney, Sutter
County
463 2nd Street
Yuba City, CA 95991

Attorney, Tehama County
Post Office Box 519
Red Bluff, CA 96080

District Attorney, Trinity
County
Post Office Box 310
Weaverville, CA 96093

District Attorney, Tuolumne
County
423 N. Washington Street
Sonora, CA 95370

District Attorney, Yuba
County
215 Fifth Street, Suite 152
Marysville, CA 95901

Los Angeles City Attorney's
Office
City Hall East
200 N. Main Street, Suite 800
Los Angeles, CA 90012

APPENDIX A

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARD ASSESSMENT CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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

The following summary has been prepared by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the lead agency for the implementation of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (commonly known as “Proposition 65”). A copy of this summary must be included as an attachment to any notice of violation served upon an alleged violator of the Act. The summary provides basic information about the provisions of the law, and is intended to serve only as a convenient source of general information. It is not intended to provide authoritative guidance on the meaning or application of the law. The reader is directed to the statute and OEHHA implementing regulations (see citations below) for further information.

FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING THE BASIS FOR THE ALLEGATIONS IN THE NOTICE RELATED TO YOUR BUSINESS, CONTACT THE PERSON IDENTIFIED ON THE NOTICE.

The text of Proposition 65 (Health and Safety Code Sections 25249.5 through 25249.13) is available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65law72003.html>. Regulations that provide more specific guidance on compliance, and that specify procedures to be followed by the State in carrying out certain aspects of the law, are found in Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations, sections 25102 through 27001.¹ These implementing regulations are available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65Regs.html>.

WHAT DOES PROPOSITION 65 REQUIRE?

The “Proposition 65 List.” Under Proposition 65, the lead agency (OEHHA) publishes a list of chemicals that are known to the State of California to cause cancer and/or reproductive toxicity. Chemicals are placed on the Proposition 65 list if they are known to cause cancer and/or birth defects or other reproductive harm, such as damage to

¹ All further regulatory references are to sections of Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations unless otherwise indicated. The statute, regulations and relevant case law are available on the OEHHA website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>.

female or male reproductive systems or to the developing fetus. This list must be updated at least once a year. The current Proposition 65 list of chemicals is available on the OEHHA website at: http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65_list/Newlist.html.

Only those chemicals that are on the list are regulated under Proposition 65. Businesses that produce, use, release or otherwise engage in activities involving listed chemicals must comply with the following:

Clear and reasonable warnings. A business is required to warn a person before “knowingly and intentionally” exposing that person to a listed chemical unless an exemption applies. The warning given must be “clear and reasonable.” This means that the warning must: (1) clearly make known that the chemical involved is known to cause cancer, or birth defects or other reproductive harm; and (2) be given in such a way that it will effectively reach the person before he or she is exposed to that chemical. Some exposures are exempt from the warning requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

Prohibition from discharges into drinking water. A business must not knowingly discharge or release a listed chemical into water or onto land where it passes or probably will pass into a source of drinking water. Some discharges are exempt from this requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

DOES PROPOSITION 65 PROVIDE ANY EXEMPTIONS?

Yes. You should consult the current version of the statute and regulations (<http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>) to determine all applicable exemptions, the most common of which are the following:

Grace Period. Proposition 65 warning requirements do not apply until 12 months after the chemical has been listed. The Proposition 65 discharge prohibition does not apply to a discharge or release of a chemical that takes place less than 20 months after the listing of the chemical.

Governmental agencies and public water utilities. All agencies of the federal, state or local government, as well as entities operating public water systems, are exempt.

Businesses with nine or fewer employees. Neither the warning requirement nor the discharge prohibition applies to a business that employs a total of nine or fewer employees. This includes all employees, not just those present in California.

Exposures that pose no significant risk of cancer. For chemicals that are listed under Proposition 65 as known to the State to cause cancer, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure occurs at a level that poses “no significant risk.” This means that the exposure is calculated to result in not more than one excess case of cancer in 100,000 individuals exposed over a 70-year lifetime. The Proposition 65 regulations identify specific “No Significant Risk Levels” (NSRLs) for many listed carcinogens. Exposures below these levels are exempt from the warning requirement. See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of NSRLs, and Section 25701 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

Exposures that will produce no observable reproductive effect at 1,000 times the level in question. For chemicals known to the State to cause reproductive toxicity, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure will produce no observable effect, even at 1,000 times the level in question. In other words, the level of exposure must be below the “no observable effect level” divided by 1,000. This number is known as the Maximum Allowable Dose Level (MADL). See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of MADLs, and Section 25801 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

Exposures to Naturally Occurring Chemicals in Food. Certain exposures to chemicals that naturally occur in foods (i.e., that do not result from any known human activity, including activity by someone other than the person causing the exposure) are exempt from the warning requirements of the law. If the chemical is a contaminant² it must be reduced to the lowest level feasible. Regulations explaining this exemption can be found in Section 25501.

Discharges that do not result in a “significant amount” of the listed chemical entering any source of drinking water. The prohibition from discharges into drinking water does not apply if the discharger is able to demonstrate that a “significant amount” of the listed chemical has not, does not, or will not pass into or probably pass into a source of drinking water, and that the discharge complies with all other applicable laws, regulations, permits, requirements, or orders. A “significant amount” means any detectable amount, except an amount that would meet the “no significant risk” level for chemicals that cause cancer or that is 1,000 times below the “no observable effect” level for chemicals that cause reproductive toxicity, if an individual were exposed to that amount in drinking water.

² See Section 25501(a)(4).

HOW IS PROPOSITION 65 ENFORCED?

Enforcement is carried out through civil lawsuits. These lawsuits may be brought by the Attorney General, any district attorney, or certain city attorneys. Lawsuits may also be brought by private parties acting in the public interest, but only after providing notice of the alleged violation to the Attorney General, the appropriate district attorney and city attorney, and the business accused of the violation. The notice must provide adequate information to allow the recipient to assess the nature of the alleged violation. The notice must comply with the information and procedural requirements specified in Section 25903 of Title 27 and sections 3100-3103 of Title 11. A private party may not pursue an independent enforcement action under Proposition 65 if one of the governmental officials noted above initiates an enforcement action within sixty days of the notice.

A business found to be in violation of Proposition 65 is subject to civil penalties of up to \$2,500 per day for each violation. In addition, the business may be ordered by a court to stop committing the violation.

A private party may not file an enforcement action based on certain exposures if the alleged violator meets specific conditions. For the following types of exposures, the Act provides an opportunity for the business to correct the alleged violation:

- An exposure to alcoholic beverages that are consumed on the alleged violator's premises to the extent onsite consumption is permitted by law;
- An exposure to a Proposition 65 listed chemical in a food or beverage prepared and sold on the alleged violator's premises that is primarily intended for immediate consumption on- or off-premises. This only applies if the chemical was not intentionally added to the food, and was formed by cooking or similar preparation of food or beverage components necessary to render the food or beverage palatable or to avoid microbiological contamination;
- An exposure to environmental tobacco smoke caused by entry of persons (other than employees) on premises owned or operated by the alleged violator where smoking is permitted at any location on the premises;
- An exposure to listed chemicals in engine exhaust, to the extent the exposure occurs inside a facility owned or operated by the alleged violator and primarily intended for parking non-commercial vehicles.

If a private party alleges that a violation occurred based on one of the exposures described above, the private party must first provide the alleged violator a notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form.

A copy of the notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form is included in Appendix B and can be downloaded from OEHHA's website at:
<http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/p65law72003.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE LAW OR REGULATIONS...

Contact the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's Proposition 65 Implementation Office at (916) 445-6900 or via e-mail at
P65Public.Comments@oehha.ca.gov.

Revised: May 2017

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 25249.12, Health and Safety Code. Reference: Sections 25249.5, 25249.6, 25249.7, 25249.9, 25249.10 and 25249.11, Health and Safety Code.

EXHIBIT B

Michael Freund & Associates

1919 Addison Street, Suite 104
Berkeley, CA 94704
Voice: 510.499.1992 • Fax: 510.371.0885

Michael Freund, Esq.

July 26, 2024

**NOTICE OF VIOLATION OF
CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE SECTION 25249.5 *ET SEQ.*
(PROPOSITION 65)**

Dear Alleged Violators and the Appropriate Public Enforcement Agencies:

I represent Environmental Research Center, Inc. (“ERC”), 3111 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 400, San Diego, CA 92108; Tel. (619) 500-3090. ERC’s Executive Director is Chris Heptinstall. ERC is a California non-profit corporation dedicated to, among other causes, helping safeguard the public from health hazards by bringing about a reduction in the use and misuse of hazardous and toxic chemicals, facilitating a safe environment for consumers and employees, and encouraging corporate responsibility.

ERC has identified violations of California’s Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (“Proposition 65”), which is codified at California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*, with respect to the products identified below. These violations have occurred and continue to occur because the alleged Violators identified below failed to provide required clear and reasonable warnings with these products. This letter serves as a notice of these violations to the alleged Violators and the appropriate public enforcement agencies. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 25249.7(d), ERC intends to file a private enforcement action in the public interest 60 days after effective service of this notice unless the public enforcement agencies have commenced and are diligently prosecuting an action to rectify these violations.

General Information about Proposition 65. A copy of a summary of Proposition 65, prepared by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, is enclosed with this letter served to the alleged Violators identified below.

Alleged Violators. The names of the companies covered by this notice that violated Proposition 65 (hereinafter the “Violators”) are:

**PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand
Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC**

Consumer Products and Listed Chemical. The products that are the subject of this notice and the chemical in those products identified as exceeding allowable levels are:

- 1. The Genius Brand Genius Protein Dual Protein Formula for Lean Muscle Growth & Recovery
Vanilla - Lead**
- 2. The Genius Brand Genius Test Advanced Testosterone Optimization Complex - Lead**
- 3. The Genius Brand Genius Protein Dual Protein Formula for Lean Muscle Growth & Recovery
Chocolate - Lead**
- 4. The Genius Brand Genius Muscle Supports Muscular Health, Growth and Performance
Salted Caramel - Lead**

On February 27, 1987, the State of California officially listed lead as a chemical known to cause developmental toxicity, and male and female reproductive toxicity. On October 1, 1992, the State of California officially listed lead and lead compounds as chemicals known to cause cancer.

It should be noted that ERC may continue to investigate other products that may reveal further violations and result in subsequent notices of violations.

Route of Exposure. The consumer exposures that are the subject of this notice result from the recommended use of these products. Consequently, the route of exposure to this chemical has been and continues to be through ingestion.

Approximate Time Period of Violations. Ongoing violations have occurred every day since at least July 26, 2021, as well as every day since the products were introduced into the California marketplace, and will continue every day until clear and reasonable warnings are provided to product purchasers and users or until this known toxic chemical is either removed from or reduced to allowable levels in the products. Proposition 65 requires that a clear and reasonable warning be provided prior to exposure to the identified chemical. The method of warning should be a warning that appears on the product label. The Violators violated Proposition 65 because they failed to provide persons ingesting these products with appropriate warnings that they are being exposed to this chemical.

Consistent with the public interest goals of Proposition 65 and a desire to have these ongoing violations of California law quickly rectified, ERC is interested in seeking a constructive resolution of this matter that includes an enforceable written agreement by the Violators to: (1) reformulate the identified products so as to eliminate further exposures to the identified chemical, or provide appropriate warnings on the labels of these products; (2) pay an appropriate civil penalty; and (3) provide clear and reasonable warnings compliant with Proposition 65 to all persons located in California who purchased the above products in the last three years. Such a resolution will prevent further unwarned consumer exposures to the identified chemical, as well as an expensive and time-consuming litigation.

ERC has retained me as legal counsel in connection with this matter. **Please direct all communications regarding this Notice of Violation to my attention at the law office address and telephone number indicated on the letterhead or at freund1@aol.com.**

Sincerely,



Michael Freund

Attachments

Certificate of Merit

Certificate of Service

OEHHA Summary (to PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand and Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC and their Registered Agents for Service of Process only)

Additional Supporting Information for Certificate of Merit (to AG only)

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

**Re: Environmental Research Center, Inc.’s Notice of Proposition 65 Violations by PacificNorthwest
Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand and Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC**

I, Michael Freund, declare:

1. This Certificate of Merit accompanies the attached 60-day notice in which it is alleged that the parties identified in the notice violated California Health & Safety Code Section 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 exposure to the listed chemical that is the subject of the notice.

4. Based on the information obtained through those consultants, 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 Violators will be able to establish any of the affirmative defenses set forth in the statute.

5. Along with the copy of this Certificate of Merit served on the Attorney General is attached additional 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., (1) 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: July 26, 2024

Michael Freund

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE PURSUANT TO 27 CCR § 25903

I, the undersigned, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the following is true and correct:

I am a citizen of the United States and over the age of 18 years of age. My business address is 306 Joy Street, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia 30742. I am a resident or employed in the county where the mailing occurred. The envelope or package was placed in the mail at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

On July 26, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; “THE SAFE DRINKING WATER AND TOXIC ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1986 (PROPOSITION 65): A SUMMARY”** on the following parties by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties listed below and depositing it in a U.S. Postal Service Office with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by Certified Mail:

Current President or CEO
PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and
dba The Genius Brand and Catalyst Nutraceuticals,
LLC
1720 Peachtree Industrial Blvd, Ste A
Buford, GA 30518

Corporation Service Company
(PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually
and dba The Genius Brand)
300 Deschutes Way SW, Ste 208 MC-CSC1
Tumwater, WA 98501

Corporation Service Company
(Registered Agent for Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC)
2 Sun Court, Ste 400
Peachtree Corners, GA 30092

On July 26, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF MERIT AS REQUIRED BY CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.7(d)(1)** were served on the following party when a true and correct copy thereof was uploaded on the California Attorney General’s website, which can be accessed at <https://oag.ca.gov/prop65/add-60-day-notice> :

Office of the California Attorney General
Prop 65 Enforcement Reporting
1515 Clay Street, Suite 2000
Oakland, CA 94612-0550

On July 26, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** were served on the following parties when a true and correct copy thereof was sent via electronic mail to each of the parties listed below:

Pamela Y. Price, District Attorney
Alameda County
7677 Oakport Street, Suite 650
Oakland, CA 94621
CEPDProp65@acgov.org

Stacey Grassini, Deputy District Attorney
Contra Costa County
900 Ward Street
Martinez, CA 94553
sgrassini@contracostada.org

Barbara Yook, District Attorney
Calaveras County
891 Mountain Ranch Road
San Andreas, CA 95249
Prop65Env@co.calaveras.ca.us

James Clinchard, Assistant District Attorney
El Dorado County
778 Pacific Street
Placerville, CA 95667
EDCDAPROP65@edcda.us

Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

July 26, 2024

Page 5

Lisa A. Smittcamp, District Attorney
Fresno County
2100 Tulare Street
Fresno, CA 93721
consumerprotection@fresnocountyca.gov

Thomas L. Hardy, District Attorney
Inyo County
168 North Edwards Street
Independence, CA 93526
inyoda@inyocounty.us

Devin Chandler, Program Coordinator
Lassen County
2950 Riverside Dr
Susanville, CA 96130
dchandler@co.lassen.ca.us

Lori E. Frugoli, District Attorney
Marin County
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 145
San Rafael, CA 94903
consumer@marincounty.org

Walter W. Wall, District Attorney
Mariposa County
P.O. Box 730
Mariposa, CA 95338
mcda@mariposacounty.org

Kimberly Lewis, District Attorney
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550 West Main St
Merced, CA 95340
Prop65@countyofmerced.com

Jeannine M. Pacioni, District Attorney
Monterey County
1200 Aguajito Road
Monterey, CA 93940
Prop65DA@co.monterey.ca.us

Allison Haley, District Attorney
Napa County
1127 First Street, Ste C
Napa, CA 94559
CEPD@countyofnapa.org

Clifford H. Newell, District Attorney
Nevada County
201 Commercial St
Nevada City, CA 95959
DA.Prop65@co.nevada.ca.us

Todd Spitzer, District Attorney
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300 N Flower St
Santa Ana, CA 92703
Prop65notice@ocdapa.org

Morgan Briggs Gire, District Attorney
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Roseville, CA 95678
Prop65@placer.ca.gov

David Hollister, District Attorney
Plumas County
520 Main St
Quincy, CA 95971
davidhollister@countyofplumas.com

Paul E. Zellerbach, District Attorney
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3072 Orange Street
Riverside, CA 92501
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Anne Marie Schubert, District Attorney
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Summer Stephan, District Attorney
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San Diego, CA 92101
SanDiegoDAProp65@sdca.org

Mark Ankorn, Deputy City Attorney
San Diego City Attorney
1200 Third Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101
CityAttyProp65@sandiego.gov

Alexandra Grayner, Assistant District Attorney
San Francisco District Attorney's Office
350 Rhode Island Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
Alexandra.grayner@sfgov.org

Henry Lifton, Deputy City Attorney
San Francisco City Attorney
1390 Market Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102
Prop65@sfcityattys.org

Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

July 26, 2024

Page 6

Tori Verber Salazar, District Attorney
San Joaquin County
222 E. Weber Avenue, Room 202
Stockton, CA 95202
DAConsumer.Environmental@sjcda.org

Eric J. Dobroth, Deputy District Attorney
San Luis Obispo County
County Government Center Annex, 4th Floor
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408
edobroth@co.slo.ca.us

Christopher Dalbey, Deputy District Attorney
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1112 Santa Barbara Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
DAProp65@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

Bud Porter, Supervising Deputy District Attorney
Santa Clara County
70 W Hedding St
San Jose, CA 95110
EPU@da.sccgov.org

Nora V. Frimann, City Attorney
Santa Clara City Attorney
200 E. Santa Clara Street, 16th Floor
San Jose, CA 96113
Proposition65notices@sanjoseca.gov

Jeffrey S. Rosell, District Attorney
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701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Prop65DA@santacruzcounty.us

Jill Ravitch, District Attorney
Sonoma County
600 Administration Dr
Sonoma, CA 95403
Jeannie.Barnes@sonoma-county.org

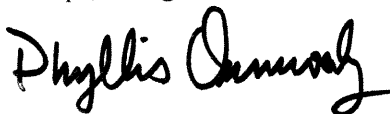
Phillip J. Cline, District Attorney
Tulare County
221 S Mooney Blvd
Visalia, CA 95370
Prop65@co.tulare.ca.us

Gregory D. Totten, District Attorney
Ventura County
800 S Victoria Ave
Ventura, CA 93009
daspecialops@ventura.org

Jeff W. Reisig, District Attorney
Yolo County
301 Second Street
Woodland, CA 95695
cfepd@yolocounty.org

On July 26, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATION, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** on each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto, and depositing it at a U.S. Postal Service Office with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by First Class Mail.

Executed on July 26, 2024, in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.



Phyllis Dunwoody

Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

July 26, 2024

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Service List

District Attorney, Alpine
County
P.O. Box 248
17300 Hwy 89
Markleeville, CA 96120

District Attorney, Amador
County
708 Court Street, Suite 202
Jackson, CA 95642

District Attorney, Butte
County
25 County Center Drive, Suite
245
Oroville, CA 95965

District Attorney, Colusa
County
310 6th St
Colusa, CA 95932

District Attorney, Del Norte
County
450 H Street, Room 171
Crescent City, CA 95531

District Attorney, Glenn
County
Post Office Box 430
Willows, CA 95988

District Attorney, Humboldt
County
825 5th Street 4th Floor
Eureka, CA 95501

District Attorney, Imperial
County
940 West Main Street, Ste 102
El Centro, CA 92243

District Attorney, Kern County
1215 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

District Attorney, Kings
County
1400 West Lacey Boulevard
Hanford, CA 93230

District Attorney, Lake County
255 N. Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

District Attorney, Los Angeles
County
Hall of Justice
211 West Temple St., Ste 1200
Los Angeles, CA 90012

District Attorney, Madera
County
300 South G Street, Ste 300
Madera, CA 93637

District Attorney, Mendocino
County
Post Office Box 1000
Ukiah, CA 95482

District Attorney, Modoc
County
204 S Court Street, Room 202
Alturas, CA 96101-4020

District Attorney, Mono
County
Post Office Box 617
Bridgeport, CA 93517

District Attorney, San Benito
County
419 Fourth Street, 2nd Floor
Hollister, CA 95023

District Attorney, San
Bernardino County
303 West Third Street
San Bernadino, CA 92415

District Attorney, San Mateo
County
400 County Ctr., 3rd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063

District Attorney, Shasta
County
1355 West Street
Redding, CA 96001

District Attorney, Sierra
County
Post Office Box 457
100 Courthouse Square, 2nd
Floor
Downieville, CA 95936

District Attorney, Siskiyou
County
Post Office Box 986
Yreka, CA 96097

District Attorney, Solano
County
675 Texas Street, Ste 4500
Fairfield, CA 94533

District Attorney, Stanislaus
County
832 12th Street, Ste 300
Modesto, CA 95354

District Attorney, Sutter
County
463 2nd Street
Yuba City, CA 95991

District Attorney, Tehama
County
Post Office Box 519
Red Bluff, CA 96080

District Attorney, Trinity
County
Post Office Box 310
Weaverville, CA 96093

District Attorney, Tuolumne
County
423 N. Washington Street
Sonora, CA 95370

District Attorney, Yuba
County
215 Fifth Street, Suite 152
Marysville, CA 95901

Los Angeles City Attorney's
Office
City Hall East
200 N. Main Street, Suite 800
Los Angeles, CA 90012

APPENDIX A

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARD ASSESSMENT CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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

The following summary has been prepared by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the lead agency for the implementation of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (commonly known as “Proposition 65”). A copy of this summary must be included as an attachment to any notice of violation served upon an alleged violator of the Act. The summary provides basic information about the provisions of the law, and is intended to serve only as a convenient source of general information. It is not intended to provide authoritative guidance on the meaning or application of the law. The reader is directed to the statute and OEHHA implementing regulations (see citations below) for further information.

FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING THE BASIS FOR THE ALLEGATIONS IN THE NOTICE RELATED TO YOUR BUSINESS, CONTACT THE PERSON IDENTIFIED ON THE NOTICE.

The text of Proposition 65 (Health and Safety Code Sections 25249.5 through 25249.13) is available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65law72003.html>. Regulations that provide more specific guidance on compliance, and that specify procedures to be followed by the State in carrying out certain aspects of the law, are found in Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations, sections 25102 through 27001.¹ These implementing regulations are available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65Regs.html>.

WHAT DOES PROPOSITION 65 REQUIRE?

The “Proposition 65 List.” Under Proposition 65, the lead agency (OEHHA) publishes a list of chemicals that are known to the State of California to cause cancer and/or reproductive toxicity. Chemicals are placed on the Proposition 65 list if they are known to cause cancer and/or birth defects or other reproductive harm, such as damage to

¹ All further regulatory references are to sections of Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations unless otherwise indicated. The statute, regulations and relevant case law are available on the OEHHA website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>.

female or male reproductive systems or to the developing fetus. This list must be updated at least once a year. The current Proposition 65 list of chemicals is available on the OEHHA website at: http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65_list/Newlist.html.

Only those chemicals that are on the list are regulated under Proposition 65. Businesses that produce, use, release or otherwise engage in activities involving listed chemicals must comply with the following:

Clear and reasonable warnings. A business is required to warn a person before “knowingly and intentionally” exposing that person to a listed chemical unless an exemption applies. The warning given must be “clear and reasonable.” This means that the warning must: (1) clearly make known that the chemical involved is known to cause cancer, or birth defects or other reproductive harm; and (2) be given in such a way that it will effectively reach the person before he or she is exposed to that chemical. Some exposures are exempt from the warning requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

Prohibition from discharges into drinking water. A business must not knowingly discharge or release a listed chemical into water or onto land where it passes or probably will pass into a source of drinking water. Some discharges are exempt from this requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

DOES PROPOSITION 65 PROVIDE ANY EXEMPTIONS?

Yes. You should consult the current version of the statute and regulations (<http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>) to determine all applicable exemptions, the most common of which are the following:

Grace Period. Proposition 65 warning requirements do not apply until 12 months after the chemical has been listed. The Proposition 65 discharge prohibition does not apply to a discharge or release of a chemical that takes place less than 20 months after the listing of the chemical.

Governmental agencies and public water utilities. All agencies of the federal, state or local government, as well as entities operating public water systems, are exempt.

Businesses with nine or fewer employees. Neither the warning requirement nor the discharge prohibition applies to a business that employs a total of nine or fewer employees. This includes all employees, not just those present in California.

Exposures that pose no significant risk of cancer. For chemicals that are listed under Proposition 65 as known to the State to cause cancer, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure occurs at a level that poses “no significant risk.” This means that the exposure is calculated to result in not more than one excess case of cancer in 100,000 individuals exposed over a 70-year lifetime. The Proposition 65 regulations identify specific “No Significant Risk Levels” (NSRLs) for many listed carcinogens. Exposures below these levels are exempt from the warning requirement. See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of NSRLs, and Section 25701 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

Exposures that will produce no observable reproductive effect at 1,000 times the level in question. For chemicals known to the State to cause reproductive toxicity, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure will produce no observable effect, even at 1,000 times the level in question. In other words, the level of exposure must be below the “no observable effect level” divided by 1,000. This number is known as the Maximum Allowable Dose Level (MADL). See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of MADLs, and Section 25801 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

Exposures to Naturally Occurring Chemicals in Food. Certain exposures to chemicals that naturally occur in foods (i.e., that do not result from any known human activity, including activity by someone other than the person causing the exposure) are exempt from the warning requirements of the law. If the chemical is a contaminant² it must be reduced to the lowest level feasible. Regulations explaining this exemption can be found in Section 25501.

Discharges that do not result in a “significant amount” of the listed chemical entering any source of drinking water. The prohibition from discharges into drinking water does not apply if the discharger is able to demonstrate that a “significant amount” of the listed chemical has not, does not, or will not pass into or probably pass into a source of drinking water, and that the discharge complies with all other applicable laws, regulations, permits, requirements, or orders. A “significant amount” means any detectable amount, except an amount that would meet the “no significant risk” level for chemicals that cause cancer or that is 1,000 times below the “no observable effect” level for chemicals that cause reproductive toxicity, if an individual were exposed to that amount in drinking water.

² See Section 25501(a)(4).

HOW IS PROPOSITION 65 ENFORCED?

Enforcement is carried out through civil lawsuits. These lawsuits may be brought by the Attorney General, any district attorney, or certain city attorneys. Lawsuits may also be brought by private parties acting in the public interest, but only after providing notice of the alleged violation to the Attorney General, the appropriate district attorney and city attorney, and the business accused of the violation. The notice must provide adequate information to allow the recipient to assess the nature of the alleged violation. The notice must comply with the information and procedural requirements specified in Section 25903 of Title 27 and sections 3100-3103 of Title 11. A private party may not pursue an independent enforcement action under Proposition 65 if one of the governmental officials noted above initiates an enforcement action within sixty days of the notice.

A business found to be in violation of Proposition 65 is subject to civil penalties of up to \$2,500 per day for each violation. In addition, the business may be ordered by a court to stop committing the violation.

A private party may not file an enforcement action based on certain exposures if the alleged violator meets specific conditions. For the following types of exposures, the Act provides an opportunity for the business to correct the alleged violation:

- An exposure to alcoholic beverages that are consumed on the alleged violator's premises to the extent onsite consumption is permitted by law;
- An exposure to a Proposition 65 listed chemical in a food or beverage prepared and sold on the alleged violator's premises that is primarily intended for immediate consumption on- or off-premises. This only applies if the chemical was not intentionally added to the food, and was formed by cooking or similar preparation of food or beverage components necessary to render the food or beverage palatable or to avoid microbiological contamination;
- An exposure to environmental tobacco smoke caused by entry of persons (other than employees) on premises owned or operated by the alleged violator where smoking is permitted at any location on the premises;
- An exposure to listed chemicals in engine exhaust, to the extent the exposure occurs inside a facility owned or operated by the alleged violator and primarily intended for parking non-commercial vehicles.

If a private party alleges that a violation occurred based on one of the exposures described above, the private party must first provide the alleged violator a notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form.

A copy of the notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form is included in Appendix B and can be downloaded from OEHHA's website at:
<http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/p65law72003.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE LAW OR REGULATIONS...

Contact the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's Proposition 65 Implementation Office at (916) 445-6900 or via e-mail at
P65Public.Comments@oehha.ca.gov.

Revised: May 2017

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 25249.12, Health and Safety Code. Reference: Sections 25249.5, 25249.6, 25249.7, 25249.9, 25249.10 and 25249.11, Health and Safety Code.

EXHIBIT C

Michael Freund & Associates

1919 Addison Street, Suite 104
Berkeley, CA 94704
Voice: 510.499.1992 • Fax: 510.371.0885

Michael Freund, Esq.

October 11, 2024

**NOTICE OF VIOLATION OF
CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE SECTION 25249.5 *ET SEQ.*
(PROPOSITION 65)**

Dear Alleged Violators and the Appropriate Public Enforcement Agencies:

I represent Environmental Research Center, Inc. (“ERC”), 3111 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 400, San Diego, CA 92108; Tel. (619) 500-3090. ERC’s Executive Director is Chris Heptinstall. ERC is a California non-profit corporation dedicated to, among other causes, helping safeguard the public from health hazards by bringing about a reduction in the use and misuse of hazardous and toxic chemicals, facilitating a safe environment for consumers and employees, and encouraging corporate responsibility.

ERC has identified violations of California’s Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (“Proposition 65”), which is codified at California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*, with respect to the products identified below. These violations have occurred and continue to occur because the alleged Violators identified below failed to provide required clear and reasonable warnings with these products. This letter serves as a notice of these violations to the alleged Violators and the appropriate public enforcement agencies. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 25249.7(d), ERC intends to file a private enforcement action in the public interest 60 days after effective service of this notice unless the public enforcement agencies have commenced and are diligently prosecuting an action to rectify these violations.

General Information about Proposition 65. A copy of a summary of Proposition 65, prepared by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, is enclosed with this letter served to the alleged Violators identified below.

Alleged Violators. The names of the companies covered by this notice that violated Proposition 65 (hereinafter the “Violators”) are:

**PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand
Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC**

Consumer Products and Listed Chemical. The products that are the subject of this notice and the chemical in those products identified as exceeding allowable levels are:

**The Genius Brand Brilliant Brew Coffee Alternative Cocoa - Lead
The Genius Brand Genius Pre Mind-to-Muscle Pre Workout Powerhouse Sour Cherry - Lead
The Genius Brand Genius Greens Superfood Nutrition for Mind & Body – Lead**

On February 27, 1987, the State of California officially listed lead as a chemical known to cause developmental toxicity, and male and female reproductive toxicity. On October 1, 1992, the State of California officially listed lead and lead compounds as chemicals known to cause cancer.

It should be noted that ERC may continue to investigate other products that may reveal further violations and result in subsequent notices of violations.

Route of Exposure. The consumer exposures that are the subject of this notice result from the recommended use of these products. Consequently, the route of exposure to this chemical has been and continues to be through ingestion.

Approximate Time Period of Violations. Ongoing violations have occurred every day since at least October 11, 2021, as well as every day since the products were introduced into the California marketplace, and will continue every day until clear and reasonable warnings are provided to product purchasers and users or until this known toxic chemical is either removed from or reduced to allowable levels in the products. Proposition 65 requires that a clear and reasonable warning be provided prior to exposure to the identified chemical. The method of warning should be a warning that appears on the product label. The Violators violated Proposition 65 because they failed to provide persons ingesting these products with appropriate warnings that they are being exposed to this chemical.

Consistent with the public interest goals of Proposition 65 and a desire to have these ongoing violations of California law quickly rectified, ERC is interested in seeking a constructive resolution of this matter that includes an enforceable written agreement by the Violators to: (1) reformulate the identified products so as to eliminate further exposures to the identified chemical, or provide appropriate warnings on the labels of these products; (2) pay an appropriate civil penalty; and (3) provide clear and reasonable warnings compliant with Proposition 65 to all persons located in California who purchased the above products in the last three years. Such a resolution will prevent further unwarned consumer exposures to the identified chemical, as well as an expensive and time-consuming litigation.

ERC has retained me as legal counsel in connection with this matter. **Please direct all communications regarding this Notice of Violation to my attention at the law office address and telephone number indicated on the letterhead or at freund1@aol.com.**

Sincerely,



Michael Freund

Attachments

Certificate of Merit

Certificate of Service

OEHHA Summary (to PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand and Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC and their Registered Agents for Service of Process only)

Additional Supporting Information for Certificate of Merit (to AG only)

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

**Re: Environmental Research Center, Inc.’s Notice of Proposition 65 Violations by PacificNorthwest
Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand and Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC**

I, Michael Freund, declare:

1. This Certificate of Merit accompanies the attached 60-day notice in which it is alleged that the parties identified in the notice violated California Health & Safety Code Section 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 exposure to the listed chemical that is the subject of the notice.

4. Based on the information obtained through those consultants, 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 Violators will be able to establish any of the affirmative defenses set forth in the statute.

5. Along with the copy of this Certificate of Merit served on the Attorney General is attached additional 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., (1) 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: October 11, 2024

Michael Freund

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE PURSUANT TO 27 CCR § 25903

I, the undersigned, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the following is true and correct:

I am a citizen of the United States and over the age of 18 years of age. My business address is 306 Joy Street, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia 30742. I am a resident or employed in the county where the mailing occurred. The envelope or package was placed in the mail at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

On October 11, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; “THE SAFE DRINKING WATER AND TOXIC ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1986 (PROPOSITION 65): A SUMMARY”** on the following parties by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties listed below and depositing it in a U.S. Postal Service Office with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by Certified Mail:

Current President or CEO
PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and
dba The Genius Brand and Catalyst Nutraceuticals,
LLC
1720 Peachtree Industrial Blvd, Ste A
Buford, GA 30518

Corporation Service Company
(PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually
and dba The Genius Brand)
300 Deschutes Way SW, Ste 208 MC-CSC1
Tumwater, WA 98501

Corporation Service Company
(Registered Agent for Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC)
2 Sun Court, Ste 400
Peachtree Corners, GA 30092

On October 11, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF MERIT AS REQUIRED BY CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.7(d)(1)** were served on the following party when a true and correct copy thereof was uploaded on the California Attorney General’s website, which can be accessed at <https://oag.ca.gov/prop65/add-60-day-notice> :

Office of the California Attorney General
Prop 65 Enforcement Reporting
1515 Clay Street, Suite 2000
Oakland, CA 94612-0550

On October 11, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** were served on the following parties when a true and correct copy thereof was sent via electronic mail to each of the parties listed below:

Pamela Y. Price, District Attorney
Alameda County
7677 Oakport Street, Suite 650
Oakland, CA 94621
CEPDProp65@acgov.org

Barbara Yook, District Attorney
Calaveras County
891 Mountain Ranch Road
San Andreas, CA 95249
Prop65Env@co.calaveras.ca.us

Stacey Grassini, Deputy District Attorney

Contra Costa County
900 Ward Street
Martinez, CA 94553
sgrassini@contracostada.org

James Clinchard, Assistant District Attorney
El Dorado County
778 Pacific Street
Placerville, CA 95667
EDCDAPROP65@edcda.us

Lisa A. Smittcamp, District Attorney
Fresno County

Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

October 11, 2024

Page 5

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Fresno, CA 93721
consumerprotection@fresnocountyca.gov

Thomas L. Hardy, District Attorney
Inyo County
168 North Edwards Street
Independence, CA 93526
inyoda@inyocounty.us

Devin Chandler, Program Coordinator
Lassen County
2950 Riverside Dr
Susanville, CA 96130
dchandler@co.lassen.ca.us

Lori E. Frugoli, District Attorney
Marin County
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 145
San Rafael, CA 94903
consumer@marincounty.org

Walter W. Wall, District Attorney
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P.O. Box 730
Mariposa, CA 95338
mcda@mariposacounty.org

Kimberly Lewis, District Attorney
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550 West Main St
Merced, CA 95340
Prop65@countyofmerced.com

Jeannine M. Pacioni, District Attorney
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1200 Aguajito Road
Monterey, CA 93940
Prop65DA@co.monterey.ca.us

Allison Haley, District Attorney
Napa County
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Napa, CA 94559
CEPD@countyofnapa.org

Clifford H. Newell, District Attorney
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201 Commercial St
Nevada City, CA 95959
DA.Prop65@co.nevada.ca.us

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Santa Ana, CA 92703
Prop65notice@ocdapa.org

Morgan Briggs Gire, District Attorney
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Roseville, CA 95678
Prop65@placer.ca.gov

David Hollister, District Attorney
Plumas County
520 Main St
Quincy, CA 95971
davidhollister@countyofplumas.com

Paul E. Zellerbach, District Attorney
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3072 Orange Street
Riverside, CA 92501
Prop65@rivcoda.org

Anne Marie Schubert, District Attorney
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Sacramento, CA 95814
Prop65@sacda.org

Summer Stephan, District Attorney
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330 West Broadway
San Diego, CA 92101
SanDiegoDAProp65@sdca.org

Mark Ankcorn, Deputy City Attorney
San Diego City Attorney
1200 Third Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101
CityAttyProp65@sandiego.gov

Alexandra Grayner, Assistant District Attorney
San Francisco District Attorney's Office
350 Rhode Island Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
Alexandra.grayner@sfgov.org

Henry Lifton, Deputy City Attorney
San Francisco City Attorney
1390 Market Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102
Prop65@sfcityattorney.org

Tori Verber Salazar, District Attorney
San Joaquin County

Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

October 11, 2024

Page 6

222 E. Weber Avenue, Room 202
Stockton, CA 95202
DAConsumer.Environmental@sjcda.org

Eric J. Dobroth, Deputy District Attorney
San Luis Obispo County
County Government Center Annex, 4th Floor
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408
edobroth@co.slo.ca.us

Christopher Dalbey, Deputy District Attorney
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Santa Barbara, CA 93101
DAProp65@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

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San Jose, CA 95110
EPU@da.sccgov.org

Nora V. Frimann, City Attorney
Santa Clara City Attorney
200 E. Santa Clara Street, 16th Floor
San Jose, CA 96113
Proposition65notices@sanjoseca.gov

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Prop65DA@santacruzcounty.us

Jill Ravitch, District Attorney
Sonoma County
600 Administration Dr
Sonoma, CA 95403
Jeannie.Barnes@sonoma-county.org

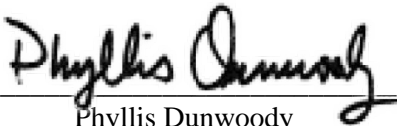
Phillip J. Cline, District Attorney
Tulare County
221 S Mooney Blvd
Visalia, CA 95370
Prop65@co.tulare.ca.us

Gregory D. Totten, District Attorney
Ventura County
800 S Victoria Ave
Ventura, CA 93009
daspecialops@ventura.org

Jeff W. Reisig, District Attorney
Yolo County
301 Second Street
Woodland, CA 95695
cfepd@yolocounty.org

On October 11, 2024, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATION, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** on each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto, and depositing it at a U.S. Postal Service Office with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by First Class Mail.

Executed on October 11, 2024, in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.


Phyllis Dunwoody

Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

October 11, 2024

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Service List

District Attorney, Alpine
County
P.O. Box 248
17300 Hwy 89
Markleeville, CA 96120

District Attorney, Amador
County
708 Court Street, Suite 202
Jackson, CA 95642

District Attorney, Butte
County
25 County Center Drive, Suite
245
Oroville, CA 95965

District Attorney, Colusa
County
310 6th St
Colusa, CA 95932

District Attorney, Del Norte
County
450 H Street, Room 171
Crescent City, CA 95531

District Attorney, Glenn
County
Post Office Box 430
Willows, CA 95988

District Attorney, Humboldt
County
825 5th Street 4th Floor
Eureka, CA 95501

District Attorney, Imperial
County
940 West Main Street, Ste 102
El Centro, CA 92243

District Attorney, Kern County
1215 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

District Attorney, Kings
County
1400 West Lacey Boulevard
Hanford, CA 93230

District Attorney, Lake County
255 N. Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

District Attorney, Los Angeles
County
Hall of Justice
211 West Temple St., Ste 1200
Los Angeles, CA 90012

District Attorney, Madera
County
300 South G Street, Ste 300
Madera, CA 93637

District Attorney, Mendocino
County
Post Office Box 1000
Ukiah, CA 95482

District Attorney, Modoc
County
204 S Court Street, Room 202
Alturas, CA 96101-4020

District Attorney, Mono
County
Post Office Box 617
Bridgeport, CA 93517

District Attorney, San Benito
County
419 Fourth Street, 2nd Floor
Hollister, CA 95023

District Attorney, San
Bernardino County
303 West Third Street
San Bernadino, CA 92415

District Attorney, San Mateo
County
400 County Ctr., 3rd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063

District Attorney, Shasta
County
1355 West Street
Redding, CA 96001

District Attorney, Sierra
County
Post Office Box 457
100 Courthouse Square, 2nd
Floor
Downieville, CA 95936

District Attorney, Siskiyou
County
Post Office Box 986
Yreka, CA 96097

District Attorney, Solano
County
675 Texas Street, Ste 4500
Fairfield, CA 94533

District Attorney, Stanislaus
County
832 12th Street, Ste 300
Modesto, CA 95354

District Attorney, Sutter
County
463 2nd Street
Yuba City, CA 95991

District Attorney, Tehama
County
Post Office Box 519
Red Bluff, CA 96080

District Attorney, Trinity
County
Post Office Box 310
Weaverville, CA 96093

District Attorney, Tuolumne
County
423 N. Washington Street
Sonora, CA 95370

District Attorney, Yuba
County
215 Fifth Street, Suite 152
Marysville, CA 95901

Los Angeles City Attorney's
Office
City Hall East
200 N. Main Street, Suite 800
Los Angeles, CA 90012

APPENDIX A

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARD ASSESSMENT CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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

The following summary has been prepared by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the lead agency for the implementation of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (commonly known as “Proposition 65”). A copy of this summary must be included as an attachment to any notice of violation served upon an alleged violator of the Act. The summary provides basic information about the provisions of the law, and is intended to serve only as a convenient source of general information. It is not intended to provide authoritative guidance on the meaning or application of the law. The reader is directed to the statute and OEHHA implementing regulations (see citations below) for further information.

FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING THE BASIS FOR THE ALLEGATIONS IN THE NOTICE RELATED TO YOUR BUSINESS, CONTACT THE PERSON IDENTIFIED ON THE NOTICE.

The text of Proposition 65 (Health and Safety Code Sections 25249.5 through 25249.13) is available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65law72003.html>. Regulations that provide more specific guidance on compliance, and that specify procedures to be followed by the State in carrying out certain aspects of the law, are found in Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations, sections 25102 through 27001.¹ These implementing regulations are available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65Regs.html>.

WHAT DOES PROPOSITION 65 REQUIRE?

The “Proposition 65 List.” Under Proposition 65, the lead agency (OEHHA) publishes a list of chemicals that are known to the State of California to cause cancer and/or reproductive toxicity. Chemicals are placed on the Proposition 65 list if they are known to cause cancer and/or birth defects or other reproductive harm, such as damage to

¹ All further regulatory references are to sections of Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations unless otherwise indicated. The statute, regulations and relevant case law are available on the OEHHA website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>.

female or male reproductive systems or to the developing fetus. This list must be updated at least once a year. The current Proposition 65 list of chemicals is available on the OEHHA website at: http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65_list/Newlist.html.

Only those chemicals that are on the list are regulated under Proposition 65. Businesses that produce, use, release or otherwise engage in activities involving listed chemicals must comply with the following:

Clear and reasonable warnings. A business is required to warn a person before “knowingly and intentionally” exposing that person to a listed chemical unless an exemption applies. The warning given must be “clear and reasonable.” This means that the warning must: (1) clearly make known that the chemical involved is known to cause cancer, or birth defects or other reproductive harm; and (2) be given in such a way that it will effectively reach the person before he or she is exposed to that chemical. Some exposures are exempt from the warning requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

Prohibition from discharges into drinking water. A business must not knowingly discharge or release a listed chemical into water or onto land where it passes or probably will pass into a source of drinking water. Some discharges are exempt from this requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

DOES PROPOSITION 65 PROVIDE ANY EXEMPTIONS?

Yes. You should consult the current version of the statute and regulations (<http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>) to determine all applicable exemptions, the most common of which are the following:

Grace Period. Proposition 65 warning requirements do not apply until 12 months after the chemical has been listed. The Proposition 65 discharge prohibition does not apply to a discharge or release of a chemical that takes place less than 20 months after the listing of the chemical.

Governmental agencies and public water utilities. All agencies of the federal, state or local government, as well as entities operating public water systems, are exempt.

Businesses with nine or fewer employees. Neither the warning requirement nor the discharge prohibition applies to a business that employs a total of nine or fewer employees. This includes all employees, not just those present in California.

Exposures that pose no significant risk of cancer. For chemicals that are listed under Proposition 65 as known to the State to cause cancer, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure occurs at a level that poses “no significant risk.” This means that the exposure is calculated to result in not more than one excess case of cancer in 100,000 individuals exposed over a 70-year lifetime. The Proposition 65 regulations identify specific “No Significant Risk Levels” (NSRLs) for many listed carcinogens. Exposures below these levels are exempt from the warning requirement. See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of NSRLs, and Section 25701 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

Exposures that will produce no observable reproductive effect at 1,000 times the level in question. For chemicals known to the State to cause reproductive toxicity, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure will produce no observable effect, even at 1,000 times the level in question. In other words, the level of exposure must be below the “no observable effect level” divided by 1,000. This number is known as the Maximum Allowable Dose Level (MADL). See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of MADLs, and Section 25801 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

Exposures to Naturally Occurring Chemicals in Food. Certain exposures to chemicals that naturally occur in foods (i.e., that do not result from any known human activity, including activity by someone other than the person causing the exposure) are exempt from the warning requirements of the law. If the chemical is a contaminant² it must be reduced to the lowest level feasible. Regulations explaining this exemption can be found in Section 25501.

Discharges that do not result in a “significant amount” of the listed chemical entering any source of drinking water. The prohibition from discharges into drinking water does not apply if the discharger is able to demonstrate that a “significant amount” of the listed chemical has not, does not, or will not pass into or probably pass into a source of drinking water, and that the discharge complies with all other applicable laws, regulations, permits, requirements, or orders. A “significant amount” means any detectable amount, except an amount that would meet the “no significant risk” level for chemicals that cause cancer or that is 1,000 times below the “no observable effect” level for chemicals that cause reproductive toxicity, if an individual were exposed to that amount in drinking water.

² See Section 25501(a)(4).

HOW IS PROPOSITION 65 ENFORCED?

Enforcement is carried out through civil lawsuits. These lawsuits may be brought by the Attorney General, any district attorney, or certain city attorneys. Lawsuits may also be brought by private parties acting in the public interest, but only after providing notice of the alleged violation to the Attorney General, the appropriate district attorney and city attorney, and the business accused of the violation. The notice must provide adequate information to allow the recipient to assess the nature of the alleged violation. The notice must comply with the information and procedural requirements specified in Section 25903 of Title 27 and sections 3100-3103 of Title 11. A private party may not pursue an independent enforcement action under Proposition 65 if one of the governmental officials noted above initiates an enforcement action within sixty days of the notice.

A business found to be in violation of Proposition 65 is subject to civil penalties of up to \$2,500 per day for each violation. In addition, the business may be ordered by a court to stop committing the violation.

A private party may not file an enforcement action based on certain exposures if the alleged violator meets specific conditions. For the following types of exposures, the Act provides an opportunity for the business to correct the alleged violation:

- An exposure to alcoholic beverages that are consumed on the alleged violator's premises to the extent onsite consumption is permitted by law;
- An exposure to a Proposition 65 listed chemical in a food or beverage prepared and sold on the alleged violator's premises that is primarily intended for immediate consumption on- or off-premises. This only applies if the chemical was not intentionally added to the food, and was formed by cooking or similar preparation of food or beverage components necessary to render the food or beverage palatable or to avoid microbiological contamination;
- An exposure to environmental tobacco smoke caused by entry of persons (other than employees) on premises owned or operated by the alleged violator where smoking is permitted at any location on the premises;
- An exposure to listed chemicals in engine exhaust, to the extent the exposure occurs inside a facility owned or operated by the alleged violator and primarily intended for parking non-commercial vehicles.

If a private party alleges that a violation occurred based on one of the exposures described above, the private party must first provide the alleged violator a notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form.

A copy of the notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form is included in Appendix B and can be downloaded from OEHHA's website at:
<http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/p65law72003.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE LAW OR REGULATIONS...

Contact the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's Proposition 65 Implementation Office at (916) 445-6900 or via e-mail at
P65Public.Comments@oehha.ca.gov.

Revised: May 2017

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 25249.12, Health and Safety Code. Reference: Sections 25249.5, 25249.6, 25249.7, 25249.9, 25249.10 and 25249.11, Health and Safety Code.

EXHIBIT D

Michael Freund & Associates

1919 Addison Street, Suite 104
Berkeley, CA 94704
Voice: 510.499.1992 • Fax: 510.371.0885

Michael Freund, Esq.

February 26, 2025

**NOTICE OF VIOLATION OF
CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE SECTION 25249.5 ET SEQ.
(PROPOSITION 65)**

Dear Alleged Violators and the Appropriate Public Enforcement Agencies:

I represent Environmental Research Center, Inc. (“ERC”), 3111 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 400, San Diego, CA 92108; Tel. (619) 500-3090. ERC’s Executive Director is Chris Heptinstall. ERC is a California non-profit corporation dedicated to, among other causes, helping safeguard the public from health hazards by bringing about a reduction in the use and misuse of hazardous and toxic chemicals, facilitating a safe environment for consumers and employees, and encouraging corporate responsibility.

ERC has identified violations of California’s Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (“Proposition 65”), which is codified at California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*, with respect to the product identified below. These violations have occurred and continue to occur because the alleged Violators identified below failed to provide required clear and reasonable warnings with this product. This letter serves as a notice of these violations to the alleged Violators and the appropriate public enforcement agencies. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 25249.7(d), ERC intends to file a private enforcement action in the public interest 60 days after effective service of this notice unless the public enforcement agencies have commenced and are diligently prosecuting an action to rectify these violations.

General Information about Proposition 65. A copy of a summary of Proposition 65, prepared by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, is enclosed with this letter served to the alleged Violators identified below.

Alleged Violators. The names of the companies covered by this notice that violated Proposition 65 (hereinafter the “Violators”) are:

**PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand
Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC**

Consumer Product and Listed Chemical. The product that is the subject of this notice and the chemical in that product identified as exceeding allowable levels is:

- **The Genius Brand Genius Vegan Protein Vegan Muscle Building Fuel Chocolate - Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA)**

On November 10, 2017, the State of California officially listed Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) as a chemical known to cause developmental toxicity. On February 25, 2022, the State of California officially listed Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) as a chemical known to cause cancer.

It should be noted that ERC may continue to investigate other products that may reveal further violations and result in subsequent notices of violations.

Route of Exposure. The consumer exposures that are the subject of this notice result from the recommended use of this product. Consequently, the route of exposure to this chemical has been and continues to be through ingestion.

Approximate Time Period of Violations. Ongoing violations have occurred every day since at least February 26, 2022, as well as every day since the product was introduced into the California marketplace and will continue every day until clear and reasonable warnings are provided to product purchasers and users or until this known toxic chemical is either removed from or reduced to allowable levels in the product. Proposition 65 requires that a clear and reasonable warning be provided prior to exposure to the identified chemical. The method of warning should be a warning that appears on the product label. The Violators violated Proposition 65 because they failed to provide persons ingesting this product with appropriate warnings that they are being exposed to this chemical.

Consistent with the public interest goals of Proposition 65 and a desire to have these ongoing violations of California law quickly rectified, ERC is interested in seeking a constructive resolution of this matter that includes an enforceable written agreement by the Violators to: (1) recall the identified product so as to eliminate further exposures to the identified chemical, and/or (2) affix clear and reasonable Prop 65 warning labels for products sold in the future while reformulating such product to eliminate the exposures, and (3) conduct bio-monitoring of all California consumers that have ingested the identified chemical in the listed product, and (4) pay an appropriate civil penalty. Such a resolution will prevent further unwarned consumer exposures to the identified chemical, as well as an expensive and time-consuming litigation.

ERC's Executive Director is Chris Heptinstall, and is located at 3111 Camino Del Rio North, Suite 400, San Diego, CA 92108; Tel. 619-500-3090. ERC has retained me as legal counsel in connection with this matter. **Please direct all communications regarding this Notice of Violation to my attention at the law office address and telephone number indicated on the letterhead or at freund1@aol.com.**

Sincerely,



Michael Freund

Attachments

Certificate of Merit

Certificate of Service

OEHHA Summary (to PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand and Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC and their Registered Agents for Service of Process only)

Additional Supporting Information for Certificate of Merit (to AG only)

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Health and Safety Code Section 25249.7 (d)

**Re: Environmental Research Center, Inc.'s Notice of Proposition 65 Violations by PacificNorthwest
Naturals LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand and Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC**

I, Michael Freund, declare:

1. This Certificate of Merit accompanies the attached sixty-day notice(s) in which it is alleged the parties identified in the notices have violated Health and Safety Code section 25249.6 by failing to provide clear and reasonable warnings.

2. I am the attorney for the noticing party, Environmental Research Center.

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 the 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 plaintiffs' 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 the information identified in Health and Safety Code section 25249.7(h)(2), i.e., (1) 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: February 26, 2025

Michael Freund

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE PURSUANT TO 27 CCR § 25903

I, the undersigned, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the following is true and correct:

I am a citizen of the United States and over the age of 18 years of age. My business address is 306 Joy Street, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia 30742. I am a resident or employed in the county where the mailing occurred. The envelope or package was placed in the mail at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

On February 26, 2025, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; “THE SAFE DRINKING WATER AND TOXIC ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1986 (PROPOSITION 65): A SUMMARY”** on the following parties by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties listed below and depositing it in a U.S. Postal Service Office with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by Certified Mail:

Andy Kupsco, Chief Executive Officer
or Current President or CEO
PacificNorthwest Naturals LLC, individually and
dba The Genius Brand and Catalyst Nutraceuticals,
LLC
1720 Peachtree Industrial Blvd, Ste A
Buford, GA 30518

Corporation Service Company
(Registered Agent for PacificNorthwest Naturals
LLC, individually and dba The Genius Brand and
Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC)
300 Deschutes Way SW, Ste 208 MC-CSC1
Tumwater, WA 98501

Corporation Service Company
(Registered Agent for Catalyst Nutraceuticals, LLC)
2 Sun Court, Ste 400
Peachtree Corners, GA 30092

On February 26, 2025, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT; ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF MERIT AS REQUIRED BY CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.7(d)(1)** were served on the following party when a true and correct copy thereof was uploaded on the California Attorney General’s website, which can be accessed at <https://oag.ca.gov/prop65/add-60-day-notice> :

Office of the California Attorney General
Prop 65 Enforcement Reporting
1515 Clay Street, Suite 2000
Oakland, CA 94612-0550

On February 26, 2025, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I verified the following documents **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** were served on the following parties when a true and correct copy thereof was sent via electronic mail to each of the parties listed below:

Royl Roberts, Interim District Attorney
Alameda County
7677 Oakport Street, Suite 650
Oakland, CA 94621
CEPDProp65@acgov.org

Stacey Grassini, Deputy District Attorney
Contra Costa County
900 Ward Street
Martinez, CA 94553
sgrassini@contracostada.org

Barbara Yook, District Attorney
Calaveras County
891 Mountain Ranch Road
San Andreas, CA 95249
Prop65Env@co.calaveras.ca.us

James Clinchard, Assistant District Attorney
El Dorado County
778 Pacific Street
Placerville, CA 95667
EDCDAPROP65@edcda.us

Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

February 26, 2025

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Independence, CA 93526
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Susanville, CA 96130
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San Rafael, CA 94903
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Roseville, CA 95678
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davidhollister@countyofplumas.com

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SanDiegoDAProp65@sdca.org

Mark Ankcorn, Deputy City Attorney
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San Diego, CA 92101
CityAttyProp65@sandiego.gov

Alexandra Grayner, Assistant District Attorney
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San Francisco, CA 94103
Alexandra.grayner@sfgov.org

Henry Lifton, Deputy City Attorney
San Francisco City Attorney
1390 Market Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102
Prop65@sfcityattorney.org

February 26, 2025

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222 E. Weber Avenue, Room 202
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DAConsumer.Environmental@sjcda.org

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DAProp65@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

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Nora V. Frimann, City Attorney
Santa Clara City Attorney
200 E. Santa Clara Street, 16th Floor
San Jose, CA 96113
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Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Prop65DA@santacruzcounty.us

Carla Rodriguez, District Attorney
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Santa Rosa CA 95403
ECLD@sonoma-county.org

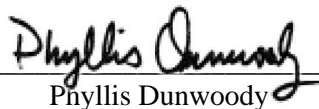
Phillip J. Cline, District Attorney
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221 S Mooney Blvd
Visalia, CA 95370
Prop65@co.tulare.ca.us

Gregory D. Totten, District Attorney
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800 S Victoria Ave
Ventura, CA 93009
daspecialops@ventura.org

Jeff W. Reisig, District Attorney
Yolo County
301 Second Street
Woodland, CA 95695
cfepd@yolocounty.org

On February 26, 2025, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, I served the following documents: **NOTICE OF VIOLATION, CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE §25249.5 ET SEQ.; CERTIFICATE OF MERIT** on each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto by placing a true and correct copy thereof in a sealed envelope, addressed to each of the parties on the Service List attached hereto, and depositing it at a U.S. Postal Service Office with the postage fully prepaid for delivery by First Class Mail.

Executed on February 26, 2025, in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.


Phyllis Dunwoody

Notice of Violation of California Health & Safety Code §25249.5 *et seq.*

February 26, 2025

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Service List

District Attorney, Alpine
County
P.O. Box 248
17300 Hwy 89
Markleeville, CA 96120

District Attorney, Amador
County
708 Court Street, Suite 202
Jackson, CA 95642

District Attorney, Butte
County
25 County Center Drive, Suite
245
Oroville, CA 95965

District Attorney, Colusa
County
310 6th St
Colusa, CA 95932

District Attorney, Del Norte
County
450 H Street, Room 171
Crescent City, CA 95531

District Attorney, Glenn
County
Post Office Box 430
Willows, CA 95988

District Attorney, Humboldt
County
825 5th Street 4th Floor
Eureka, CA 95501

District Attorney, Imperial
County
940 West Main Street, Ste 102
El Centro, CA 92243

District Attorney, Kern County
1215 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

District Attorney, Kings
County
1400 West Lacey Boulevard
Hanford, CA 93230

District Attorney, Lake County
255 N. Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

District Attorney, Los Angeles
County
Hall of Justice
211 West Temple St., Ste 1200
Los Angeles, CA 90012

District Attorney, Madera
County
300 South G Street, Ste 300
Madera, CA 93637

District Attorney, Mendocino
County
Post Office Box 1000
Ukiah, CA 95482

District Attorney, Modoc
County
204 S Court Street, Room 202
Alturas, CA 96101-4020

District Attorney, Mono
County
Post Office Box 617
Bridgeport, CA 93517

District Attorney, San Benito
County
419 Fourth Street, 2nd Floor
Hollister, CA 95023

District Attorney, San
Bernardino County
303 West Third Street
San Bernadino, CA 92415

District Attorney, San Mateo
County
400 County Ctr., 3rd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063

District Attorney, Shasta
County
1355 West Street
Redding, CA 96001

District Attorney, Sierra
County
Post Office Box 457
100 Courthouse Square, 2nd
Floor
Downieville, CA 95936

District Attorney, Siskiyou
County
Post Office Box 986
Yreka, CA 96097

District Attorney, Solano
County
675 Texas Street, Ste 4500
Fairfield, CA 94533

District Attorney, Stanislaus
County
832 12th Street, Ste 300
Modesto, CA 95354

District Attorney, Sutter
County
463 2nd Street
Yuba City, CA 95991

District Attorney, Tehama
County
Post Office Box 519
Red Bluff, CA 96080

District Attorney, Trinity
County
Post Office Box 310
Weaverville, CA 96093

District Attorney, Tuolumne
County
423 N. Washington Street
Sonora, CA 95370

District Attorney, Yuba
County
215 Fifth Street, Suite 152
Marysville, CA 95901

Los Angeles City Attorney's
Office
City Hall East
200 N. Main Street, Suite 800
Los Angeles, CA 90012

APPENDIX A

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARD ASSESSMENT CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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

The following summary has been prepared by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the lead agency for the implementation of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (commonly known as “Proposition 65”). A copy of this summary must be included as an attachment to any notice of violation served upon an alleged violator of the Act. The summary provides basic information about the provisions of the law, and is intended to serve only as a convenient source of general information. It is not intended to provide authoritative guidance on the meaning or application of the law. The reader is directed to the statute and OEHHA implementing regulations (see citations below) for further information.

FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING THE BASIS FOR THE ALLEGATIONS IN THE NOTICE RELATED TO YOUR BUSINESS, CONTACT THE PERSON IDENTIFIED ON THE NOTICE.

The text of Proposition 65 (Health and Safety Code Sections 25249.5 through 25249.13) is available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65law72003.html>. Regulations that provide more specific guidance on compliance, and that specify procedures to be followed by the State in carrying out certain aspects of the law, are found in Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations, sections 25102 through 27001.¹ These implementing regulations are available online at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/P65Regs.html>.

WHAT DOES PROPOSITION 65 REQUIRE?

The “Proposition 65 List.” Under Proposition 65, the lead agency (OEHHA) publishes a list of chemicals that are known to the State of California to cause cancer and/or reproductive toxicity. Chemicals are placed on the Proposition 65 list if they are known to cause cancer and/or birth defects or other reproductive harm, such as damage to

¹ All further regulatory references are to sections of Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations unless otherwise indicated. The statute, regulations and relevant case law are available on the OEHHA website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>.

female or male reproductive systems or to the developing fetus. This list must be updated at least once a year. The current Proposition 65 list of chemicals is available on the OEHHA website at: http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65_list/Newlist.html.

Only those chemicals that are on the list are regulated under Proposition 65. Businesses that produce, use, release or otherwise engage in activities involving listed chemicals must comply with the following:

Clear and reasonable warnings. A business is required to warn a person before “knowingly and intentionally” exposing that person to a listed chemical unless an exemption applies. The warning given must be “clear and reasonable.” This means that the warning must: (1) clearly make known that the chemical involved is known to cause cancer, or birth defects or other reproductive harm; and (2) be given in such a way that it will effectively reach the person before he or she is exposed to that chemical. Some exposures are exempt from the warning requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

Prohibition from discharges into drinking water. A business must not knowingly discharge or release a listed chemical into water or onto land where it passes or probably will pass into a source of drinking water. Some discharges are exempt from this requirement under certain circumstances discussed below.

DOES PROPOSITION 65 PROVIDE ANY EXEMPTIONS?

Yes. You should consult the current version of the statute and regulations (<http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/index.html>) to determine all applicable exemptions, the most common of which are the following:

Grace Period. Proposition 65 warning requirements do not apply until 12 months after the chemical has been listed. The Proposition 65 discharge prohibition does not apply to a discharge or release of a chemical that takes place less than 20 months after the listing of the chemical.

Governmental agencies and public water utilities. All agencies of the federal, state or local government, as well as entities operating public water systems, are exempt.

Businesses with nine or fewer employees. Neither the warning requirement nor the discharge prohibition applies to a business that employs a total of nine or fewer employees. This includes all employees, not just those present in California.

Exposures that pose no significant risk of cancer. For chemicals that are listed under Proposition 65 as known to the State to cause cancer, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure occurs at a level that poses “no significant risk.” This means that the exposure is calculated to result in not more than one excess case of cancer in 100,000 individuals exposed over a 70-year lifetime. The Proposition 65 regulations identify specific “No Significant Risk Levels” (NSRLs) for many listed carcinogens. Exposures below these levels are exempt from the warning requirement. See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of NSRLs, and Section 25701 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

Exposures that will produce no observable reproductive effect at 1,000 times the level in question. For chemicals known to the State to cause reproductive toxicity, a warning is not required if the business causing the exposure can demonstrate that the exposure will produce no observable effect, even at 1,000 times the level in question. In other words, the level of exposure must be below the “no observable effect level” divided by 1,000. This number is known as the Maximum Allowable Dose Level (MADL). See OEHHA's website at: <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/getNSRLs.html> for a list of MADLs, and Section 25801 *et seq.* of the regulations for information concerning how these levels are calculated.

Exposures to Naturally Occurring Chemicals in Food. Certain exposures to chemicals that naturally occur in foods (i.e., that do not result from any known human activity, including activity by someone other than the person causing the exposure) are exempt from the warning requirements of the law. If the chemical is a contaminant² it must be reduced to the lowest level feasible. Regulations explaining this exemption can be found in Section 25501.

Discharges that do not result in a “significant amount” of the listed chemical entering any source of drinking water. The prohibition from discharges into drinking water does not apply if the discharger is able to demonstrate that a “significant amount” of the listed chemical has not, does not, or will not pass into or probably pass into a source of drinking water, and that the discharge complies with all other applicable laws, regulations, permits, requirements, or orders. A “significant amount” means any detectable amount, except an amount that would meet the “no significant risk” level for chemicals that cause cancer or that is 1,000 times below the “no observable effect” level for chemicals that cause reproductive toxicity, if an individual were exposed to that amount in drinking water.

² See Section 25501(a)(4).

HOW IS PROPOSITION 65 ENFORCED?

Enforcement is carried out through civil lawsuits. These lawsuits may be brought by the Attorney General, any district attorney, or certain city attorneys. Lawsuits may also be brought by private parties acting in the public interest, but only after providing notice of the alleged violation to the Attorney General, the appropriate district attorney and city attorney, and the business accused of the violation. The notice must provide adequate information to allow the recipient to assess the nature of the alleged violation. The notice must comply with the information and procedural requirements specified in Section 25903 of Title 27 and sections 3100-3103 of Title 11. A private party may not pursue an independent enforcement action under Proposition 65 if one of the governmental officials noted above initiates an enforcement action within sixty days of the notice.

A business found to be in violation of Proposition 65 is subject to civil penalties of up to \$2,500 per day for each violation. In addition, the business may be ordered by a court to stop committing the violation.

A private party may not file an enforcement action based on certain exposures if the alleged violator meets specific conditions. For the following types of exposures, the Act provides an opportunity for the business to correct the alleged violation:

- An exposure to alcoholic beverages that are consumed on the alleged violator's premises to the extent onsite consumption is permitted by law;
- An exposure to a Proposition 65 listed chemical in a food or beverage prepared and sold on the alleged violator's premises that is primarily intended for immediate consumption on- or off-premises. This only applies if the chemical was not intentionally added to the food, and was formed by cooking or similar preparation of food or beverage components necessary to render the food or beverage palatable or to avoid microbiological contamination;
- An exposure to environmental tobacco smoke caused by entry of persons (other than employees) on premises owned or operated by the alleged violator where smoking is permitted at any location on the premises;
- An exposure to listed chemicals in engine exhaust, to the extent the exposure occurs inside a facility owned or operated by the alleged violator and primarily intended for parking non-commercial vehicles.

If a private party alleges that a violation occurred based on one of the exposures described above, the private party must first provide the alleged violator a notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form.

A copy of the notice of special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form is included in Appendix B and can be downloaded from OEHHA's website at:
<http://oehha.ca.gov/prop65/law/p65law72003.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE LAW OR REGULATIONS...

Contact the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's Proposition 65 Implementation Office at (916) 445-6900 or via e-mail at
P65Public.Comments@oehha.ca.gov.

Revised: May 2017

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 25249.12, Health and Safety Code. Reference: Sections 25249.5, 25249.6, 25249.7, 25249.9, 25249.10 and 25249.11, Health and Safety Code.