

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LIVING GALLERY, LLC AND MASTER-HALCO, INC.

1. RECITALS

1.1 The Parties

1.1.1 This Settlement Agreement (“Agreement”) is entered into by and between Master-Halco, Inc. (“Master-Halco”) and The Living Gallery, LLC (“The Living Gallery”) (each individually referred to as a “Party” and collectively as the “Parties”).

1.1.2 The Living Gallery is an organization based in California with an interest in protecting the environment, improving human health and the health of ecosystems, and supporting environmentally sound practices, which includes promoting awareness of exposure to toxic chemicals and reducing exposure to hazardous substances found in consumer products.

1.1.3 The Living Gallery alleges that Master-Halco is a person in the course of doing business as the term is defined in California *Health & Safety Code* section 25249.6 et seq. (“Proposition 65”).

1.2 Allegations

1.2.1 The Living Gallery alleges that Master-Halco sold Master-Halco Carriage Bolts, including but not limited to #087030 (hereinafter the “Products”) in the State of California causing users in California to be exposed to hazardous levels of Lead without providing “clear and reasonable warnings”, in violation of Proposition 65. Lead is listed as known to cause cancer and birth defects or other reproductive harm.

1.2.2 On January 7, 2026, Plaintiff sent a Sixty-Day Notice of Violation (the “Notice”) to Master-Halco, as well as to Itochu International, Inc., Home Depot U.S.A., Inc. d/b/a Contractors’ Warehouse, and the various public enforcement agencies regarding the alleged violation of Proposition 65 with respect to the Products.

1.3 No Admissions

Master-Halco denies all allegations in The Living Gallery’s Notice and maintains that the Products have been, and are, in compliance with all laws, and that Master-Halco

has not violated Proposition 65. This Agreement shall not be construed as an admission of liability by Master-Halco but to the contrary as a compromise of claims that are expressly contested and denied. However, nothing in this section shall affect the Parties' obligations, duties, and responsibilities under this Agreement.

1.4 Compromise

The Parties enter into this Agreement in order to resolve the controversy described above in a manner consistent with prior Proposition 65 settlements and consent judgments that were entered in the public interest and to avoid prolonged and costly litigation between them.

1.5 Effective Date

The "Effective Date" shall be the date upon which a complete and fully executed copy of the Agreement is delivered to each Party or its counsel.

2. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

2.1 Reformulation Standard

Commencing 90 days after the Effective Date, Master-Halco shall not distribute, sell, offer for sale, or cause to have the Products sold in California unless (a) the galvanizing solution in which the Products are submerged contains no more than 90 parts per million (0.009%) of Lead, and the finished Products produce a test result no higher than 1.0 microgram of lead based on a wipe sample collected using NIOSH Method 9100 or equivalent ("Reformulated Product"), or (b) the Product is accompanied by a clear and reasonable warning as described below in Section 2.2.

2.2 Proposition 65 Warnings

2.2.1 For any Products that are not Reformulated Products, commencing 90 days after the Effective Date such Products shall be accompanied by a clear and reasonable warning. Master-Halco shall provide a warning statement as follows:

"WARNING OR CA WARNING: This product can expose you to Lead which is known to the State of California to cause cancer and birth defects or other reproductive harm. For more information go to www.P65Warnings.ca.gov."

OR Short Form

“WARNING” [OR] “CA WARNING”: Risk of cancer and reproductive harm from exposure to lead. See www.P65Warnings.ca.gov.

OR Short Form

“WARNING” [OR] “CA WARNING”: Can expose you to lead, a carcinogen and reproductive toxicant. See www.P65Warnings.ca.gov.

The warning shall be accompanied by a symbol consisting of a black exclamation point in a yellow equilateral triangle with a bold black outline. Where the label for the product is not printed using the color yellow, the symbol may be printed in black and white. The symbol shall be placed to the left of the text of the warning, in a size no smaller than the height of the word “WARNING”. Additionally, if the Product contains consumer information in a foreign language, the warning must be provided in the foreign language.

2.2.2 The Products shall carry said warning directly on each unit, label, package, shelf tag, or sign with such conspicuousness as compared with other words, statements or designs as to render it likely to be read and understood by an ordinary consumer prior to sale. However, where a “short form” warning is used, it shall also be provided on each Product unit or its label. A Product that is sold by Master-Halco on the internet to persons located in California shall also provide the warning message by a clearly marked hyperlink on the product display page, or otherwise prominently displayed to the purchaser before the purchaser completes his or her purchase of the Product. For Products that Master-Halco provides for a downstream entity to sell on the internet, Master-Halco shall comply with 27 CCR section 25600.2(b) and (c) and include an instruction that the entity comply with the warning requirements of this section. Master-Halco may also comply with this Agreement by using any other warning or transmission method(s) set forth in 27 Cal. Code Regs. §§ 25601 et seq., and amended subsequently hereafter, or other methods authorized or mandated by those regulations, that are applicable to lead exposures from the Products.

2.3 Grace Period For Existing Inventory Of Products

The injunctive relief requirements of Section 2 shall not apply to Products that are already in the stream of commerce as of 90 days after the Effective Date, which Products are expressly subject to the Releases provided in Section 4.1. For the avoidance of doubt,

Products in the stream of commerce are specifically limited to Products within the inventories of Master-Halco, Itochu International, Inc., Home Depot U.S.A., Inc. d/b/a Contractors' Warehouse, and Master-Halco's other downstream distributors, retailers, and franchisees.

3. PAYMENTS

3.1 Civil Penalty Pursuant To Proposition 65

In settlement of all claims referred to in this Agreement, Master-Halco shall pay a total civil penalty of one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) to be apportioned in accordance with *Health and Safety Code* section 25249.12(c)(1) and (d), with 75% (\$1,125.00) for State of California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment ("OEHHA"), and the remaining 25% (\$375.00) for The Living Gallery.

Master-Halco shall issue these payments collectively as part of the total payment described below in Section 3.2 via wire transfer to Law Offices of Lucas T. Novak. After receipt of the wire transfer, Law Offices of Lucas T. Novak shall be responsible for forwarding the respective payments to OEHHA and The Living Gallery.

3.2 Reimbursement Of The Living Gallery's Fees And Costs

Master-Halco shall reimburse The Living Gallery's reasonable experts' and attorneys' fees and costs incurred in prosecuting the instant action, for all work performed through execution of this Agreement, in the amount of eighteen thousand five hundred dollars (\$18,500.00). Accordingly, Master-Halco shall remit total payment via wire transfer to Law Offices of Lucas T. Novak in the amount of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000.00), which includes the civil penalty described in Section 3.1, within ten (10) business days of the Effective Date. Wire instructions have been exchanged between the Parties' counsel.

4. RELEASES

4.1 The Living Gallery's Release Of Master-Halco

The Living Gallery, acting in its individual capacity, in consideration of the promises and monetary payments contained herein, hereby releases Master-Halco, its

parents, subsidiaries, affiliated entities under common ownership, shareholders, directors, members, officers, employees, attorneys, successors and assignees, as well as their downstream distributors, wholesalers, customers, retailers, cooperative members and licensees, and franchisees, including but not limited to Itochu International, Inc. and Home Depot U.S.A., Inc. d/b/a Contractors' Warehouse (collectively "Released Parties"), from any alleged Proposition 65 violation claims asserted in The Living Gallery's Notice regarding failure to warn about Lead exposure from (1) the Products that Master-Halco sold or caused to be sold in California before and up to 90 days after the Effective Date, and (2) Products in the stream of commerce as of 90 days after the Effective Date, which are limited to Products within the inventories of Master-Halco, Itochu International, Inc., Home Depot U.S.A., Inc. d/b/a Contractors' Warehouse, and/or Master Halco's downstream distributors, wholesalers, customers, retailers, cooperative members and licensees, and franchisees.

4.2 Master-Halco's Release Of The Living Gallery

Master-Halco, by this Agreement, waives all rights to institute any form of legal action against The Living Gallery, its shareholders, directors, members, officers, employees, attorneys, experts, successors and assignees for actions or statements made or undertaken, whether in the course of investigating claims or seeking enforcement of Proposition 65 against Master-Halco in this matter. If any Released Party should institute any such action, then The Living Gallery's release of said Released Party in this Agreement shall be rendered void and unenforceable.

4.3 Waiver Of Unknown Claims

Each of the Parties acknowledges that it is familiar with Section 1542 of California Civil Code which provides as follows:

A GENERAL RELEASE DOES NOT EXTEND TO CLAIMS THAT THE CREDITOR OR RELEASING PARTY DOES NOT KNOW OR SUSPECT TO EXIST IN HIS OR HER FAVOR AT THE TIME OF EXECUTING THE RELEASE AND THAT, IF KNOWN BY HIM OR HER, WOULD HAVE MATERIALLY AFFECTED HIS OR HER

SETTLEMENT WITH THE DEBTOR OR RELEASED PARTY.

Each of the Parties waives and relinquishes any right or benefit it has or may have under Section 1542 of California Civil Code or any similar provision under the statutory or non-statutory law of any other jurisdiction to the full extent that it may lawfully waive all such rights and benefits. The Parties acknowledge that each may subsequently discover facts in addition to, or different from, those that it believes to be true with respect to the claims released herein. The Parties agree that this Agreement and the releases contained herein shall be and remain effective in all respects notwithstanding the discovery of such additional or different facts.

5. **SEVERABILITY**

Should any part or provision of this Agreement for any reason be declared by a Court to be invalid, void or unenforceable, the remaining portions and provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

6. **GOVERNING LAW**

The terms of this Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of California. This Agreement is entered into in the State of California and may only be enforced in the State of California.

7. **NOTICE**

All correspondence and notice required to be provided under this Agreement shall be in writing and delivered personally or sent by first class or certified mail addressed as follows:

TO Master-Halco: David D. Schneider, Esq. Fennemore LLP 8080 N Palm Ave, Third Fl. Fresno, CA 93711	TO The Living Gallery: Lucas T. Novak, Esq. Law Offices of Lucas T. Novak 8335 W Sunset Blvd., Suite 217 Los Angeles, CA 90069
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8. **COUNTERPARTS**

This Agreement may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, and all of which, when taken together, shall constitute the same document.

Execution and delivery of this Agreement by e-mail, facsimile, or other electronic means shall constitute legal and binding execution and delivery. Any photocopy of the executed Agreement shall have the same force and effect as the originals.

9. AUTHORIZATION

The undersigned are authorized to execute this Agreement on behalf of their respective Parties. Each Party has read, understood, and agrees to all of the terms and conditions of this Agreement. Each Party warrants to the other that it is free to enter into this Agreement and is not subject to any conflicting obligation that will or might prevent or interfere with the execution or performance of this Agreement by said Party.

AGREED TO:

Date: 9/8/26

By: 
Authorized Representative of The Living Gallery, LLC

AGREED TO:

Date: 09/08/26

By:  **Glenn Shenk**
President & CEO
Authorized Representative of Master-Halco, Inc.