



NEWS RELEASE

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JUDGE ORDERS TARGET STORES TO STOP ILLEGALLY DUMPING HAZARDOUS WASTE

Humboldt County District Attorney, Paul Gallegos, announced today that in a case being jointly prosecuted by his Office with 19 other California District Attorneys, the City Attorneys of Los Angeles and San Diego, and the state Attorney General, the judge has issued a preliminary injunction ordering Target Corporation to stop dumping hazardous wastes and materials into landfills throughout California.

California law requires companies to store, handle, and dispose hazardous wastes and materials in specified ways to avoid harm to persons and contamination of the environment. Prosecutors contend that Target, systematically, ignored those laws to cut costs. The lawsuit, filed in 2009, alleges that for eight years, more than 200 Target stores throughout the State improperly disposed defective, damaged, and leaking chemical products into giant trash compactors-where tons of hazardous wastes and contaminated materials were crushed along with discarded merchandise and garbage, and sent to area landfills instead of authorized disposal sites. The illegally disposed substances alleged in the suit included pesticides, paint, oven cleaners, pool chemicals, drain openers and other flammable, toxic, and corrosive materials.

Alameda County Superior Court Judge Stephen Brick issued the preliminary injunction last Friday, restraining Target from "[d]isposing, or causing the disposal of, any hazardous waste at a point not authorized . . . , including, without limitation, to any trash container or compactor at any Target store or distribution center, or at any landfill or transfer station not authorized to receive hazardous waste."

The injunction applies to every Target store in the State of California. District Attorney Gallegos noted the importance of the preliminary injunction: "Target has now been ordered by a judge to play by the same rules as other major California retailers that lawfully handle their hazardous waste products. The Court's order should level the playing field and eliminate any competitive advantage Target enjoyed by its noncompliance."

The case is now headed toward trial, where prosecutors will seek a permanent injunction and civil penalties.