



COUNTY OF YOLO
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Judge Orders Big Lots Stores to Pay Multi-Million Dollar Settlement
for Illegal Disposal of Hazardous Waste**

Woodland, CA – April 27, 2017 – Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig, along with 34 other California District Attorneys and two City Attorneys, announced today that San Bernardino County Superior Court Judge Bryan F. Foster has ordered Ohio-based company Big Lots Stores, Inc., and its subsidiary corporations, that own and operate Big Lots stores and a distribution center in Rancho Cucamonga, to pay \$3,507,500 in civil penalties, costs, and supplemental environmental projects.

The judgment is the result of an investigation into Big Lots Stores' unlawful disposal of hazardous waste at its distribution center and into trash bins at the 206 stores in California. Yolo County has one Big Lots store in Woodland and one in West Sacramento. Big Lots failed to properly handle hazardous waste at both the stores and distribution center.

Assistant Chief Deputy District Attorney David Irej prosecuted the case for the Yolo County District Attorney's Office. "The hazardous waste included ignitable and corrosive liquids, toxic materials, batteries, electronic devices and other e-waste," said Irej. "In some instances, the hazardous waste was the result of overstock or expired merchandise. In others, it was the result of spills, damaged containers, and customer returns."

Instead of being transported to authorized hazardous waste facilities, the waste was deposited into the trash and illegally transported to local landfills not permitted to receive the waste.

"Today's settlement is a significant victory in our efforts to make the environment cleaner and safer for the citizens of Yolo County and throughout California," said District

Attorney Reisig. “This settlement is another example of the effective partnership between our office, other district attorney offices, and environmental regulators statewide in enforcing California’s environment laws.”

Prosecutors alerted Big Lots to the violations, and the company was cooperative throughout the continued investigation. Under the settlement, Big Lots must pay \$2,017,500 in civil penalties and \$336,250 to reimburse the costs of investigation.

An additional \$350,000 will fund supplemental environmental projects furthering environmental enforcement and consumer protection in California. Big Lots will also fund hazardous waste minimization and enhanced compliance projects valued at \$803,750, and has adopted and implemented new policies and procedures and training programs designed to properly manage and dispose of hazardous waste.

The hazardous waste is now being collected by state-registered haulers who transport it to authorized disposal facilities, and disposal is now being properly documented.

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