



COUNTY OF YOLO
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
JEFF W. REISIG, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Yolo County District Attorney's Office Announces \$7.4 million
Statewide Settlement with Target for Continued Environmental
Violations**

Woodland, CA – December 5, 2018 – Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig, as part of a coalition including California Attorney General Xavier Becerra and 23 local governments, announced today a \$7.4 million statewide settlement with Target Corporation. The settlement with Target, a Minnesota-based corporation, includes enhanced environmental compliance measures and injunctive terms. The settlement resolves allegations that Target violated state laws and injunctive terms from a 2011 stipulated judgment regarding the company's handling and disposal of retail hazardous waste. The current settlement follows investigations of Target's conduct alleging that between 2012 and 2016, the company committed violations by improperly disposing into landfills hazardous waste. The improper waste included items such as electronics, batteries, aerosol cans, compact fluorescent light bulbs, and medical waste such as over-the-counter and prescribed pharmaceuticals, as well as confidential medical information from its customers.

District Attorney Jeff Reisig stated, "Our office helped initiate this investigation, was integral throughout the process of working with Target to modify their processes, and in doing so helped ensure the safety of the public and the protection of the environment from improper disposal of hazardous waste by companies under their duty to follow our environmental regulations statewide."

“Target’s ongoing and improper disposal of hazardous waste and contaminants harmed the public and the environment,” said Attorney General Becerra. “We are confident that with these strong injunctive terms and penalties, Target will implement meaningful changes to prevent this from ever happening again. However, the wise move for all companies is to abide by the law and employ proactive training and processes to help ensure that hazardous waste violations are avoided in the first place.”

This is the second settlement resolving allegations of Target’s hazardous waste compliance violations. In March 2009, the California Department of Justice and several local prosecutors, including the Yolo County District Attorney’s Office, filed a complaint against Target alleging that it violated state statutes and regulations governing the handling and disposal of hazardous waste. As part of the final settlement in 2011, Target agreed to pay \$22.5 million for penalties, attorneys’ fees, and funding for supplemental environmental projects, and to comply with injunctive terms. These included annual compliance audits by an independent contractor and terms forbidding Target from disposing or causing the disposal of hazardous waste from any Target facility to any unauthorized location, landfill, or transfer station.

Throughout 2012 and 2014, representatives of district attorneys’ offices along with local regulatory agencies inspected Target’s trash compactors, finding many instances of additional violations. The prosecutors alleged that during that time, Target unlawfully disposed of a total of 2,038 items of hazardous waste, 175 items of confidential medical information of customers, and 94 items of medical waste. The prosecuting offices understood that these findings represented just the tip of an iceberg of discoverable violations when extrapolated to several hundred locations statewide. After notifying Target of the violations, the prosecutors entered into an agreement with the company to revise the judgement entered as part of the 2011 settlement to resolve the violations detected by the prosecutors’ post-judgement investigation.

The revised final judgement terms approved by the Alameda County Superior Court includes \$3.2 million in civil penalties; \$300,000 for funding of supplemental environmental projects undertaken by entities other than Target, including \$50,000 to conduct education classes and programs for owners and operators of small businesses located in low income and minority areas in California; additional requirements that Target expend at least \$3 million to conduct three annual inspections and audits of 12 facilities, and provide reports to the Attorney General and local prosecutors, and create and implement a customer trash receptacle inspection and management program; and \$900,000 for attorneys’ fees and costs of investigation and enforcement.

In addition to Yolo County, also joining Attorney General Becerra in filing this settlement are the Counties of Alameda, Butte, Contra Costa, Fresno, Humboldt, Kings, Los Angeles, Merced, Monterey, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Ventura; and the Cities of Los Angeles and San Diego.

Target operates three retail locations and one distribution center in Yolo County.

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