

JESUS RODRIGUEZ
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY



San Diego
330 West Broadway
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 531-4040

<http://www.SanDiegoDa.com>

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For Immediate Release

Contact: [Steve Walker](#), (619) 531-3890
[Tanya Sierra](#), (619) 531-3315
[Jesse Navarro](#), (619) 531-3053

En Español

99 Cents Only Stores to Pay \$2.3 Million to Settle Hazardous Waste Case

19 Stores in San Diego County Involved in Illegal Dumping

San Diego County District Attorney [Bonnie M. Dumanis](#) together with her office's Environmental Protection Unit and 28 other California District Attorneys announced today that San Joaquin County Superior Court Judge Bob McNatt has approved of a settlement with Los Angeles-based 99 Cents Only Stores LLC, that includes more than \$2.36 million dollars in civil penalties, for improperly handling hazardous waste at 251 stores in California.

This Judgment is the culmination of a civil enforcement investigation into 99 Cents Only Stores' improper storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous and pharmaceutical waste products into company trash bins at each of the 251 stores and distribution centers in California. Instead of being sent to authorized disposal sites, hazardous waste as well as other contaminated materials, were being unlawfully transported to area landfills. Upon being notified by prosecutors of the widespread issues, 99 Cents Only Stores worked cooperatively to remedy the issue and train its employees to properly handle hazardous wastes being generated through damage, spills and returns. The hazardous waste is now being collected by state-registered haulers, taken to proper disposal facilities and properly documented and accounted for.

“Our community landfills are no place for hazardous waste,” DA Dumanis said.

“Protecting the environment along with the health of our state’s citizens is paramount. Our Environmental Protection Unit did an excellent job working with our local Department of Environmental Health and other agencies to arrive at today’s judgment.”

Under the settlement, which includes a final judgment and permanent injunction against 99 Cents Only Stores, the corporation must pay \$1.8 million in civil penalties, \$312,500 in costs and \$250,000 in supplemental environmental projects. Under the terms of the settlement, 99 Cents Only Stores also must implement certain enhanced compliance efforts.

As a result of the prosecution and settlement, California 99 Cents Only Stores have also adopted new policies and procedures designed to eliminate the disposal of retail hazardous waste

products and pharmaceutical waste into store trash bins for eventual disposal into local landfills, not equipped to handle such wastes.

The case was handled for the San Diego District Attorney's Office by Deputy District Attorney Karen Doty.

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