

JESUS RODRIGUEZ
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**OFFICE OF
THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO**

BONNIE M. DUMANIS
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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

[San Diego County District Attorney](#)

March 3, 2011
For Immediate Release

[Watch Video](#)

Contact: [Steve Walker](#)
(619) 531-3890

Target Corporation to Pay \$22.5 Million Settlement for Environmental Violations

Company Illegally Dumped Pesticides and Hazardous Chemicals

San Diego County District Attorney [Bonnie M. Dumanis](#), together with 20 other California District Attorneys, the state Attorney General and the City Attorneys in San Diego and Los Angeles announced today that a judge in Northern California has ordered the Minnesota-based Target Corporation to pay \$22.5 million as part of a settlement of a civil environmental prosecution.

“This settlement is only the first step in Target’s obligation to clean up its act. A permanent injunction, signed by the court, will hold Target accountable for any failures to follow the letter of the law down the road, even after the civil penalties and costs are paid,” said DA Dumanis. “Thanks to the hard work of our Environmental Unit and fellow prosecutors across California, Target stores in San Diego County are no longer routinely and systematically dumping hazardous waste into the environment.”

The judgment is the culmination of a civil enforcement lawsuit filed in Alameda County two years ago claiming that more than 290 Target stores and distribution centers throughout the state handled and disposed of various hazardous wastes and materials improperly over a seven-year period, including pesticides, paint, aerosols, oven cleaners, pool chemicals, drain openers and other flammable, toxic and corrosive materials. All 25 Target stores in San Diego County are involved in the hazardous waste violations

Under the settlement, which includes a final judgment and permanent injunction against Target, the corporation must pay \$22.5 million for civil penalties and costs, and to fund several supplemental environmental projects.

“Statewide investigations such as this serve as a strong warning that California will not tolerate toxic polluters of any kind,” Attorney General Kamala D. Harris said. “Companies will not get away with illegally dumping paints, pesticides and other dangerous chemicals into their trash bins, creating environmental hazards. State and local law enforcement will continue our collaborative work to protect our communities from environmental crimes.”

As a result of the prosecution, many California Target stores have already adopted new policies and procedures designed to eliminate the disposal of hazardous waste into store trash compactors and drains. Stores are now required to maintain their hazardous waste in segregated, labeled containers so as to minimize the risk of exposure to employees and customers and ensure that incompatible wastes (such as ammonia and chlorine) do not combine to cause dangerous chemical reactions.

Follow the District Attorney’s Office on [Facebook](#) [YouTube](#)

“We are pleased to work with District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis and law enforcement statewide to stop this illegal dumping of hazardous waste,” San Diego City Attorney Jan Goldsmith said. “The message needs to be sent that we will stand together in protecting our communities.”

Hazardous waste generated by California Target stores through damaged products, spills and customer returns must be collected by state-registered haulers, taken to proper disposal facilities and properly documented and accounted for. Target stores have begun to produce shipments of hazardous waste every 30 days, but before the investigation those same hazardous wastes were largely unaccounted for and, according to employees, were routinely unlawfully disposed.

California law requires companies to properly store, handle, and dispose of hazardous wastes and materials to avoid harm to persons and the environment. Prosecutors contend that Target routinely ignored those laws to cut costs, and failed to develop and implement an effective program to ensure that employees properly identify defective, damaged, and leaking products containing hazardous and toxic chemicals as hazardous waste, and dispose of them properly rather than throw them into company trash compactors.

###