

December 5, 2018
For Immediate Release

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Target Corporation to Pay \$7.4 Million Settlement for Environmental Violations

Company Failed to Stop Illegal Disposals of Hazardous Waste

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#), along with 21 other California District Attorneys, the California Attorney General and the City Attorneys in San Diego and Los Angeles today announced a \$7.4 million statewide settlement, including enhanced environmental compliance measures and injunctive terms, with Minnesota-based Target Corporation (Target). 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.

“This settlement holds Target accountable for this second violation of environmental laws that involve the improper disposal of a long list of hazardous materials,” said District Attorney Summer Stephan. **“This case serves as a reminder to corporations of the importance of environmental protection laws that safeguard the public's health and that violators will be held accountable.”**

The current settlement comes as a result of investigations of Target's conduct alleging that between 2012 and 2016 the company committed violations by improperly disposing hazardous waste into landfills across California and here in San Diego County. The waste included items such as electronics, batteries, aerosol cans, compact fluorescent light bulbs, and medical waste including syringes, over-the-counter and prescribed pharmaceuticals, as well as confidential medical information from its customers.

“We are confident that with these strong injunctive terms and penalties, Target will implement meaningful changes to prevent this from ever happening again,” said Attorney General Becerra. “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 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. After notifying Target of the violations found, the People 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 include:

- \$3.2 million in civil penalties;
- \$300,00 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.

The San Diego County District Attorney's office will receive \$300,000 in civil penalties and \$43,330 in enforcement costs. Joining the DA's Office 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 Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, Stanislaus, Tulare, Ventura, and Yolo; and the Cities of Los Angeles and San Diego.

The San Diego County District Attorney's Environmental Protection Unit is part of the DA's Economic Crimes Division which is responsible for prosecuting a wide variety of wrongdoing, including computer intrusion, identity theft, investment scams, embezzlements, real estate matters, counterfeit goods, environmental crimes and the theft of public assistance funds. The division also acts to protect consumers and businesses by successfully filing numerous civil cases to prohibit unfair business practices within the marketplace.

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About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue justice and support victims daily across San Diego County. DA Summer Stephan has devoted her life to protecting children and families and providing justice to the voiceless and most vulnerable. She is a national leader in the fight against sexual exploitation and human trafficking, and has served as a Deputy District Attorney in San Diego County for 28 years.

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