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For Immediate Release

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Bed Bath & Beyond, Inc., to Pay \$1.49 Million in Settlement of Environmental Violations

San Diego County Stores Sent Hazardous Waste to Local Landfills

District Attorney Summer Stephan, along with 30 other California District Attorneys and the Los Angeles City Attorney, announced today that a Ventura County Superior Court Judge has ordered New Jersey-based Bed Bath & Beyond, Inc. (“Bed Bath & Beyond”) to pay \$1,498,750 as part of a settlement of a civil environmental prosecution.

The judgment is the culmination of a civil enforcement lawsuit filed last month in Ventura County Superior Court claiming that more than 200 Bed Bath & Beyond stores throughout the state (including Cost Plus, buybuy BABY, Harmon, Harmon Face Values, World Market, and Cost Plus World Market stores) unlawfully handled, transported and disposed of batteries, electronic devices, ignitable liquids, aerosol products, cleaning agents, and other flammable, reactive, toxic, and corrosive materials, at local landfills that were not permitted to receive those wastes.



“This judgment once again reveals how some companies doing business in California continue to ignore laws put in place to protect the environment and our community’s health and safety,” DA Summer Stephan said. “Our Environmental Protection Unit continues to work with our colleagues up and down the state to hold corporations accountable.”

The investigation was initiated by the Ventura County District Attorney’s Office after a fire broke out on December 24, 2015 at the City of Oxnard’s Del

Norte Transfer Facility in a load of store waste from the trash compactor of the Oxnard Bed Bath and

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Beyond store. The bagged store waste burst into flames when a city employee used a front-end loader to spread the freshly dumped trash pile. Investigation recovered numerous items of regulated waste, including several electronic items and hazardous waste, including lithium batteries and a small can of lighter fluid.

About four months later, on April 14, 2016, the Oxnard Fire Department responded to a fire emergency in the trash compactor attached to the rear of the Oxnard Bed Bath & Beyond store. After that fire was extinguished, the District Attorney's Environmental Specialist inspected the waste and again discovered numerous items of regulated waste, including batteries, broken compact fluorescent bulbs and various discarded electronic devices.

Following these events, the San Diego District Attorney's Office joined Ventura County and 30 other prosecutorial agencies and environmental regulatory officials in conducting a series of undercover inspections of Bed Bath & Beyond store waste across the state. These inspections, and other investigation, revealed that Bed Bath & Beyond had been sending regulated hazardous wastes from stores to local landfills throughout California, including our local landfills in San Diego County. The waste included hazardous and flammable liquids, electronics and batteries. Bed Bath & Beyond operates 17 stores in San Diego County.



When notified of the investigation, Bed Bath and Beyond took steps to cooperate and to dedicate additional resources towards environmental compliance and improving its existing regulated-waste management program, including by performing regular self-audits of its compactors and waste bins in California.

Under the final judgment, Bed Bath & Beyond must pay \$1,327,500 in civil penalties and as reimbursement of investigation and prosecution costs, of which \$94,800 will be paid to the San Diego

County District Attorney's Office, and \$18,500 to the San Diego County Environmental Health Division. The company will pay an additional \$171,250 to fund supplemental environmental projects furthering environmental enforcement in California. The retailer will also be bound under the terms of a permanent injunction prohibiting similar future violations of law.

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About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County District Attorney'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 fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.