



RIVERSIDE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE
MIKE HESTRIN, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

WEBSITE: WWW.RIVCODA.ORG

TWITTER: @RIVCODA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 17, 2017

CONTACT: JOHN HALL
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
951.955.8662

JUDGE ORDERS DOLLAR GENERAL STORES TO PAY \$1.12 MILLION CIVIL SETTLEMENT

RIVERSIDE – Today, April 17, 2017, Riverside County District Attorney Mike Hestrin, along with 31 other California District Attorneys, announced that Tennessee-based company Dolgen California and its subsidiary corporations have been ordered by a judge to pay \$1.125 million as part of a civil settlement in an environmental prosecution.

Dolgen California and its subsidiary corporations operate Dollar General retail stores and a distribution center in California. There are 12 Dollar General stores located in Riverside County.

The final judgment agreed to by Dolgen California, DG Strategic II, and DG Strategic VII resolves allegations made in a civil enforcement lawsuit filed April 11, 2017, in Kern County. The lawsuit alleged that Dollar General stores throughout the state and their distribution center unlawfully handled and disposed of various hazardous wastes and materials over a five-year period. Those hazardous wastes and materials included automotive fluids, alkaline batteries, electronic waste, aerosol cans, expired over the counter medications, and other toxic, ignitable, and corrosive wastes.

Investigators from district attorney offices and environmental regulators statewide conducted a series of undercover inspections of waste bins originating at Dollar General stores and facilities. The inspections revealed that Dollar General stores and their distribution center had been routinely and systematically sending hazardous wastes to local landfills throughout California that were not permitted to receive those wastes. Regulators also found the documentation of employee hazardous waste training to be inaccurate or incomplete.

Dollar General was cooperative throughout the investigation and quickly responded to enhance its policies and procedures designed to eliminate the improper disposal of hazardous waste products in California. The judgment requires hazardous waste be labeled, packaged, and stored to minimize the risk of exposure to employees and customers. The proper handling of hazardous wastes also ensures that incompatible wastes do not combine to cause dangerous chemical reactions. Hazardous waste produced by California Dollar General stores through damage, spills, and returns, is now being collected by state-registered haulers, then taken to proper disposal facilities and properly documented.

Under the settlement, Dolgen California must pay \$500,000 in civil penalties and \$375,000 to reimburse the costs of the investigation. An additional \$112,000 will fund supplemental environmental projects furthering consumer protection and environmental enforcement in California. Dolgen California will also fund hazardous waste minimization and enhanced compliance projects valued at \$138,000. The retailer will be bound under the terms of a permanent injunction prohibiting similar future violations of law.

Kern County Superior Court Judge Sidney P. Chapin signed the judgement on April 13, 2017.

The case was handled in Riverside County by Deputy District Attorney Lauren Martineau of the DA's Environmental Protection Team.

###