



ERIK NASARENKO
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE



Follow us @VenturaCountyDA
vcdistrictattorney.com

Contact: Joey Buttitta
Title: Communications Manager/PIO
Phone: (805) 767-3400
Email: Joey.Buttitta@ventura.org

Approved: SW
Date: July 13, 2023
Release No.: 23-086

PetSmart to Pay \$1.46 Million in False Advertising Settlement

VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that on July 3, 2023, defendant PetSmart, LLC, a California limited liability company, entered a stipulated judgment and will pay \$1,460,000 to settle a civil law enforcement complaint alleging that it engaged in false advertising and acts of unfair competition. Specifically, the complaint alleged that PetSmart unlawfully charged customers higher prices at checkout than what was listed in the aisle, in violation of Business & Professions Code sections 17200, 17500, and 12024.2(a)(2). This action was filed in Santa Cruz County Superior Court on behalf of the District Attorneys of Ventura, Los Angeles, San Diego, Contra Costa, Santa Cruz, Sonoma, and Marin counties.

"Every Californian who walks into a retail store is entitled to pay the lowest advertised price for the products they purchase," said Senior Deputy District Attorney Andrew Reid, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office Consumer Protection Unit. "Consumers should be vigilant to ensure that they are charged only for the items they intend to purchase, and that they are charged the lowest advertised price for those products."

The judgment requires PetSmart to pay \$1,250,000 in civil penalties, \$100,000 in restitution and \$110,000 in costs to county agricultural commissioners and sealers around the state who conducted the investigation. The judgment includes an injunction that prohibits PetSmart from engaging in false or misleading advertising or charging an amount greater than the lowest price posted for an item. Additionally, the judgment requires PetSmart to implement price accuracy procedures in its California stores for a three-year period to ensure compliance with pricing accuracy requirements, including notifying customers of their right to be charged the lowest currently advertised price for any item offered for sale.