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NEWS RELEASE

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Approved: MDS 
Date: Tuesday, August 13, 2019
Release No.: 19-094

Settlement Reached with 7-Eleven, Inc., for Improper Filings

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced that on Monday, August 12, 2019, a \$1.525 million civil settlement was obtained with Texas-based 7-Eleven, Inc., to resolve allegations that the company violated state laws requiring accurate and complete reporting of training of store personnel in hazardous materials handling.

The Ventura County District Attorney joined the district attorneys of Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Mateo, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Solano, and Yolo Counties in the prosecution of this case.

7-Eleven is an operator and/or franchisor of over 1,700 convenience stores throughout California. The stores use carbon dioxide for their carbonated fountain beverage systems. Carbon dioxide is a colorless, odorless, non-flammable gas. Carbon dioxide, which is typically stored in tanks onsite, is widely used by fast-food and convenience stores and is safe if handled properly. However, if not handled properly, carbon dioxide can leak unnoticed, displacing oxygen from the air, resulting in serious health effects or even death to employees who are exposed to this gas. California businesses that use carbon dioxide are required by law to train their employees on safe handling practices and how to detect leaks from tanks and supply lines, and must file certified, complete, and accurate reports with local authorities at least annually confirming such training.

An investigation by the prosecutors' offices listed above indicated that, in contrast to reports filed by 7-Eleven on behalf of California stores, store employees were not receiving the required training in the safe handling of carbon dioxide. The settlement resolves allegations that 7-Eleven submitted certified reports for California stores that did not accurately and completely disclose employee training information as required by state laws designed to ensure the safety of first-responders, employees, and customers.

The settlement was reached after verification of revisions to 7-Eleven's business practices designed to ensure that all store employees receive proper safety training on carbon dioxide. The case was resolved by way of a stipulated final judgment entered in Contra Costa County Superior Court and requires a monetary payment of \$1.525 million from 7-Eleven, which is comprised of \$948,000 in civil penalties, \$252,000 for supplemental environmental projects promoting training for California environmental agencies and prosecutors, and \$325,000 for reimbursement of investigative and enforcement costs. 7-Eleven must also abide by a permanent injunction to ensure future statutory compliance.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

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