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NEWS RELEASE



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AT&T Agrees to Nearly \$6 Million Statewide Environmental Settlement

Case #: 22CV02492

VENTURA, Calif. - District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced that a multi-million dollar settlement has been reached with AT&T over hazardous environmental practices in Ventura County and across the state of California.

The civil case (People v. AT&T), filed in the Santa Cruz Superior Court, centered around the telecommunication company's failure to report hazardous materials (batteries) with the California Environmental Reporting System (CERS). Reporting the use of hazardous materials to CERS is required by law and has also been a part of AT&T's Hazardous Materials Business Plan.

The batteries in question were used to operate emergency generators at more than 3,200 sites across the state of California. While there has been no evidence of damage to the environment at any of the locations, the company is liable for failing to report the presence of the hazardous material.

California businesses which use or transport 55 gallons, 200 cubic feet, or 500 pounds of hazardous waste must file that business plan with CERS. Location, type, quantity, and health risk of the material are required in the report. That information is then shared with firefighters, health officials, public safety offices and regulatory agents.

AT&T self-reported the apparent oversight and has cooperated with statewide investigations including those conducted by Ventura County Environmental Health.

"Ventura County takes these violations extremely serious because they can lead to irreversible consequences to our environment," said Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko. "Today's settlement shows that no matter the size or power of a company or individual, we will work to hold them accountable for offenses that could negatively impact the health and wellbeing of Ventura County residents and first responders."

As lead counsel in this environmental prosecution, Ventura and Santa Cruz Counties will each receive more than \$700,000 as a result of this settlement. The 56 other California counties and impacted regulatory agencies will be splitting the remainder of the \$5.9 million.

The \$5.9 million settlement is the largest ever awarded statewide for this type of environmental violation.

The prosecuting attorney for the Ventura County District Attorney's Office is Karen L. Wold, a member of the Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit.

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