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NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**BIG LOTS STORES, INC. ORDERED TO PAY \$3.5 MILLION
TO SETTLE HAZARDOUS WASTE CIVIL LAWSUIT**

RIVERSIDE – Riverside County District Attorney Mike Hestrin, along with 34 District Attorney's Offices and two City Attorney's Offices across California, announced today, April 27, 2017, that a judge has ordered Ohio-based Big Lots Stores, Inc., and its subsidiary corporations, to pay \$3.5 million in civil penalties and costs for environmental violations.

The judgement in the civil lawsuit filed in San Bernardino County Superior Court is the result of an investigation into the unlawful disposal of hazardous waste by Big Lots Stores at its distribution center and its 206 California stores over several years.

There were 13 Big Lots stores in Riverside County during the time period of the violations and the investigation. Riverside County will receive \$40,500 in civil penalties, which will go to the county's consumer protection prosecution fund.

The lawsuit alleges that, instead of transporting hazardous waste to authorized hazardous waste facilities, Big Lots illegally disposed of the waste in the trash and illegally transported it to local landfills not permitted to receive such waste. The hazardous waste included ignitable and corrosive liquids, toxic materials, batteries, and waste from electronic devices. Some of the waste was the result of spills, damaged containers, or customer returns.

Once prosecutors alerted Big Lots of the violations, the company cooperated during the subsequent investigation.

Big Lots has now adopted and implemented new policies and procedures, as well as new training programs to properly manage and dispose of hazardous waste. Big Lots hazardous waste is now collected by state-registered haulers to transport it to authorized disposal facilities and is now being properly documented.

Under the settlement, Big Lots must pay \$2,017,500 in civil penalties and \$336,250 to reimburse costs of the investigation. Another \$350,000 will go to fund environmental projects that further environmental enforcement and consumer protection in California. Big Lots also will fund hazardous waste minimization and enhanced compliance projects valued at \$803,750.

The final judgement in this case was signed on April 21, 2017, by San Bernardino County Superior Court Judge Bryan F. Foster.

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

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