

OFFICE OF THE  
**DISTRICT ATTORNEY**  
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

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APPROVED BY *Joyce E. Dudley* JOYCE E. DUDLEY, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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\*\*\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\*\*\*

***Big Lots Stores, Inc. to pay \$3.5 million to settle hazardous waste violations***

Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley, together with 34 other California District Attorneys and two City Attorneys, announced today that San Bernardino County Superior Court Judge Bryan F. Foster has ordered Ohio-based company Big Lots Stores, Inc., and its subsidiary corporations, that own and operate Big Lots stores and a distribution center in Rancho Cucamonga, to pay \$3,507,500 in civil penalties, costs, and supplemental environmental projects.

The judgment is the result of an investigation into Big Lots Stores' unlawful disposal of hazardous waste at its distribution center and into trash bins at the 206 stores in California. The investigation revealed that Big Lots failed to properly handle hazardous waste at both the stores and distribution center. The hazardous waste included ignitable and corrosive liquids, toxic materials, batteries, electronic devices and other e-waste. Instead of being transported to authorized hazardous waste facilities, the waste was deposited into the trash and illegally transported to local landfills not permitted to receive the waste.

"Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the District Attorneys and investigators throughout the state, businesses operating in California are well aware of their environmental responsibilities and our environment and beyond, is better protected as a result," said District Attorney Dudley.

Prosecutors alerted Big Lots to the violations, and the company was cooperative throughout the investigation. Under the settlement, Big Lots must pay \$2,017,500 in civil penalties and \$336,250 to reimburse the costs of investigation. An additional \$350,000 will fund supplemental environmental projects furthering environmental enforcement and consumer protection in California. Big Lots will also fund hazardous waste minimization and enhanced compliance projects valued at \$803,750, and has adopted an implemented new policies and procedures and training programs designed to properly manage and dispose of hazardous waste.

There are two Big Lots stores in Santa Barbara County. Under the final judgment, Big Lots Stores, Inc. will pay \$2375.00 in civil costs and penalties and cost recovery to the Santa Barbara District Attorney's Office.

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