

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

JOYCE E. DUDLEY
District Attorney



DA 02-602

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Joyce E. Dudley

Christopher Dalbey, Deputy District Attorney

CONTACT (805) 568-2436

***** PRESS RELEASE *****

RE: People v. Best Buy Stores, L.P., Riverside County Superior Court Case No. CVRI2000477

Best Buy to Pay \$633,570 in Settlement of Consumer-Protection Violations
Joint Prosecution by Four California District Attorneys

Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley announced today that her office, together with the District Attorneys of Alameda, Riverside, and San Diego Counties, settled a consumer-protection action against Best Buy Stores, L.P., a major retailer of electronics products. The case centered on Best Buy's pricing accuracy and its return policy. The Complaint alleges that Best Buy misrepresented the price of items sold and failed to accurately disclose material aspects of its return policy, among other violations.

The Santa Barbara County Weights & Measures Department discovered pricing-accuracy violations, as did multiple other weights and measures departments across the state. The Final Judgment requires Best Buy to institute changes in its business practices to ensure that the problems identified in the Complaint do not recur. These include a renewed pricing-accuracy program and enhanced disclosures of return policies. Without admitting liability, Best Buy agreed to pay \$449,065 in civil penalties, \$109,505 in costs, and \$75,000.00 in restitution. Of these funds, the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office will receive \$112,266 in civil penalties and \$20,000 in costs. The Santa Barbara County Weights & Measures Department will receive \$3,840 in costs. As required by California law, the civil penalties will be used for the enforcement of consumer-protection laws.

District Attorney Dudley said, "Consumers are entitled to being charged the lowest-advertised price, and to return policies with clear and conspicuous terms. We are grateful that Best Buy cooperated and agreed to modify its practices. If you believe you have been the victim of consumer fraud you can file a complaint with my office and we will investigate it, no matter the size of the company." The District Attorney website explains how to submit a consumer complaint form: http://countyofsb.org/da/civ_consumer_protection.html. Consumer complaint forms are available in English and Spanish.

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