

UNITED STATES
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX

2013 JUN 10 PM 2: 29

75 HAWTHORNE STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105

US EPA - REGION IX
HEARING CLERK

In the matter of:)	Docket No. TSCA-09-2013- 0005
)	CONSENT AGREEMENT
Sierra Charter School)	and
)	FINAL ORDER PURSUANT TO
)	SECTIONS 22.13 AND 22.18
Respondent.)	
_____)	

I. CONSENT AGREEMENT

Complainant, the Director of the Communities and Ecosystems Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9, ("EPA") and Respondent Sierra Charter School (hereafter "**Respondent**") seek to settle this case and consent to the entry of this Consent Agreement and Final Order ("CAFO").

A. APPLICABLE STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

1. This administrative proceeding is initiated pursuant to Section 207 of the Toxic Substances Control Act, 15 U.S.C. § 2601, et seq. (hereinafter referred to as "TSCA" or the "**Act**"), and the Consolidated Rules of Practice Governing the Administrative Assessment of Civil Penalties, 40 C.F.R. Part 22.

2. This proceeding involves the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act ("**AHERA**"), also known as Title II of TSCA, and the regulations promulgated thereunder. Section 203(b) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2643(b), required the Administrator of EPA to, among other things, promulgate regulations prescribing procedures for determining whether asbestos-containing material is present in a school building under the authority of a local educational agency ("**LEA**"). Section 203(g) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2643(g), required the Administrator of EPA to

promulgate regulations to, among other things, require periodic reinspection of friable and non-friable asbestos. Section 203(i) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2643(i), required the Administrator of EPA to, among other things, promulgate regulations requiring each LEA to develop and implement an asbestos management plan (“AMP”) for school buildings under its authority. These regulations are codified at 40 C.F.R. Part 763, Subpart E (the “Subpart E regulations”).

3. Section 763.85(a)(2) of the Subpart E regulations states that any building leased or acquired on or after October 12, 1988 that is to be used as a school building shall be inspected as described under paragraphs (a)(3) and (4) of Section 763.85 prior to use as a school building and that, in the event that emergency use of an uninspected building as a school building is necessary, such buildings shall be inspected within 30 days after commencement of such use. Section 763.85(b) of the Subpart E regulations states that at least once every 3 years after a management plan is in effect, each LEA shall conduct a reinspection of all friable and nonfriable known or assumed asbestos-containing building material, in each school building that they lease, own, or otherwise use as a school building. Section 763.93(g)(2) of the Subpart E regulations provides that each LEA shall maintain in its administrative office a complete, updated copy of an AMP for each school under its administrative control or direction. Section 763.93(g)(3) of the Subpart E regulations provides that each school shall maintain in its administrative office a complete, updated copy of the AMP for that school. 40 C.F.R. § 763.93(g)(3).

4. Sections 207(a)(1) and (3) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2647(a) (1) and (3), provide that any LEA that fails to conduct an inspection or fails to develop an AMP pursuant to regulations under Section 203(i) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2643(i), is liable for a civil penalty. Section 207(a) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2647(a), the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990 (as amended by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996), and the subsequent Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment Rule, 40 C.F.R. Part 19, authorize a civil penalty, for each day that

a violation continues, of (1) not more than \$5,000 for violations on or before January 30, 1997; (2) not more than \$5,500 for violations after January 30, 1997 but on or before March 15, 2004; (3) not more than \$6,500 for violations after March 15, 2004 through January 12, 2009; and (4) not more than \$7,500 for violations after January 12, 2009.

5. Section 207(a) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2647(a), further provides that any civil penalty shall be assessed and collected in the same manner, and subject to the same provisions, as in the case of civil penalties assessed and collected under Section 16 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2615. Section 16(a)(2)(B) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2615(a)(2)(B), requires EPA to take into account the nature, circumstances, extent, and gravity of the violation(s), and, with respect to the violator, ability to pay, effect on ability to continue to do business, any history of prior such violations, the degree of culpability, and such other matters as justice may require. Section 207(a) states that any civil penalty collected shall be used by the LEA to comply with TSCA Title II, with any portion remaining unspent to be deposited into the Asbestos Trust Fund established pursuant to Section 5 of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986, codified at 20 U.S.C. § 4022. In addition, Section 207(c) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2647(c), requires EPA to consider the significance of the violation, the culpability of the violator, including any history of previous TSCA violations, the ability of the violator to pay the penalty, and the ability of the violator to continue to provide educational services to the community.

B. AUTHORITY AND PARTIES

6. Respondent operates Sierra Charter School at 1931 North Fine Ave, Fresno, California. Sierra Charter School is a public, state-funded school constituted within the state of California pursuant to the California Charter Schools Act of 1992. See California Education Code Sections 47605-47608. The governing body of a California Charter School is a public authority legally constituted within the State of California for administrative control or

direction of its school. California charter schools may elect to operate as, or be operated by, a nonprofit public benefit corporation. See California Education Code Section 47604(a). Sierra Charter School is governed by a board of directors of its nonprofit public benefit corporation.

7. The authority to take action under Section 207 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2647, is vested in the Administrator of EPA (“Administrator”). By EPA Delegation Order Number 12-2-A, dated May 11, 1994, the Administrator delegated to the Regional Administrator of EPA Region IX the authority to commence administrative proceedings under TSCA and to sign consent agreements memorializing settlements in such proceedings. By EPA Regional Order R9-12-2-A, dated February 11, 2013, the Regional Administrator of EPA Region IX redelegated this authority to the Director of the Communities and Ecosystems Division. The Director of the Communities and Ecosystems Division has the authority to commence and settle an enforcement action in this matter.

C. COMPLAINANT’S ALLEGATIONS

8. Respondent began operating Sierra Charter School at 1931 North Fine Ave, Fresno, California in 1999. Sierra Charter School is a nonprofit public K-12 school. Respondent owns, leases, or otherwise uses, at the minimum, one (1) "school building," as defined in Section 202(13) of TSCA Title II, 15 U.S.C. § 2642(13), and in 40 C.F.R. § 763.83. Respondent is a LEA, as defined in Section 202(7) of TSCA Title II, 15 U.S.C. § 2642(7), and in 40 C.F.R. § 763.83.

9. Sections 203(i) and 205(d) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2643(i) and 2645(d), require that Respondent, prior to using a building as a school after October 12, 1988, conduct an inspection and develop a valid AMP. Section 207(a)(3) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2647(a)(3), and 40 C.F.R. § 763.97(a), make it unlawful for Respondent to fail to conduct such inspections and develop such an AMP, and provide that each separate failure to comply with respect to a single school building

constitutes a violation of Section 207(a)(3) of TSCA. If a signed statement of an architect or project engineer has been submitted to EPA pursuant to Section 763.99(a)(7), then the LEA is not required to perform an inspection.

10. In September 2012, the EPA Region IX Toxics Office conducted an inspection of Sierra Charter School, and no AMP was available. In a letter dated January 9, 2013, EPA requested that Respondent provide its AMP to EPA. In March, 2013, Respondent provided EPA an AMP dated February 2013. The AMP documents that the school was inspected in February, 2013, that 54 square feet of asbestos-containing building material (“ACBM”) was found during the initial inspection, and documenting removal of this 54 square feet of ACBM. The AMP documents that the school currently contains no known or assumed ACBM. Prior to September 25, 2012, Respondent had not conducted an initial inspection or prepared an AMP.

11. Respondent violated Section 207(a)(1) of TSCA Title II, 15 U.S.C. § 2647(a)(1), by failing to conduct an inspection pursuant to Section 203(b), 203(e)(3) and 203(g)(2) of TSCA Title II, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2643(b), 2643(e)(3) and 2643(g)(2) and the Subpart E regulations thereunder at 40 C.F.R. Part 763, Subpart E, for the school buildings referenced in Paragraph 8 above.

12. Respondent violated Section 207(a)(3) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2647(a)(3), by failing to develop or keep current an AMP, pursuant to Section 203(i) of TSCA Title II, 15 U.S.C. § 2643(i), and the regulations thereunder at 40 C.F.R. Part 763, Subpart E, for the school buildings referenced in Paragraph 8 above.

D. RESPONDENT'S ADMISSIONS

13. To avoid the disruption of orderly educational activities and the expense of protracted and costly litigation, Respondent, in accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 22.18(b)(2), and for the purpose of this proceeding, (i) admits that EPA has jurisdiction over the subject matter of this

CAFO and over Respondent; (ii) neither admits nor denies the specific factual allegations contained in Section I.C. of this CAFO; (iii) consents to any and all conditions specified in this CAFO; (iv) agrees to pay, and consents to the assessment of, the civil administrative penalty under Section I.G of this CAFO; (v) waives any right to contest the allegations contained in Section I.C. of this CAFO, including but not limited to its right under Section 16(a)(2)(A) of TSCA to request a hearing; and (vi) waives the right to appeal the proposed final order contained in this CAFO.

E. COMPLIANCE WITH AHERA

14. AHERA and the AHERA Subpart E regulations specify the steps which must be taken to inspect each school building to determine whether that building contains asbestos-containing building material (“ACBM”) or is assumed to contain asbestos-containing material (“ACM”), and what must be done to prepare and maintain a management plan. When a LEA has properly determined that no buildings in a school contains ACBM, compliance by the LEA with AHERA and the Subpart E regulations include:

(A) Development and updating of AMP. The AMP shall include: (1) a list of the name and address of each school building; (2) for each school building, a statement of inspection, as specified by 40 C.F.R. § 763.93(e)(1), and the information that is required to be detailed in the inspection, as specified by 40 C.F.R. § 763.93(e), unless, for each school building that qualifies, the LEA has a signed statement from an architect as specified by 40 C.F.R. § 763.99(a)(7) in lieu of inspection; (3) the name, address, and telephone number of a person designated under 40 C.F.R. § 763.84 to ensure that the duties of Respondent, as the LEA, are carried out (the “Designated Person”); (4) the course name, and the dates and number of hours of training taken by that person to carry out the duties; (5) a dated copy of each year’s annual notification of the AMP’s availability to workers and building occupants or their legal guardians

(including parents, teachers and employees), along with a description of the steps taken to effect the notification; (6) a true and correct statement, signed by the Designated Person, that certifies that the general LEA responsibilities, as stipulated by 40 C.F.R. § 763.84, have been met or will be met; (7) the name of each consultant that contributed to the AMP and the applicable statement that each such consultant is accredited, as required by 40 C.F.R. § 763.93(e)(12). Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 763.93(f), if Respondent requires, the AMP may also include a statement signed by an accredited AMP developer that such a person has prepared or assisted in the preparation of the AMP or has reviewed such plan and that such plan is in compliance with the Subpart E regulations.

(B) Identification and training for Designated Person identified by the Respondent, as required by 40 C.F.R. § 763.84(g)(1). Training for the Designated Person shall be in accordance with the training requirements listed in 40 C.F.R. § 763.84(g)(2).

(C) Maintenance of a complete copy of the AMP for each school in Respondent's administrative office and in each school administrative office, as required by 40 C.F.R. §§ 763.93(g)(2) and (3). The AMP shall be available to representatives of EPA and the State, the public, including teachers, other school personnel, parents, and their representatives without cost or restriction.

(D) Written Notifications of the availability of the AMP to parent, teacher and employee organizations and a description of the steps used to make such notification, as required by 40 C.F.R. § 763.93(g)(4), and subsequent notification to these organizations at least once each school year.

Additional requirements apply to LEA's with school buildings that contain, or are assumed to contain, ACBM.

F. RESPONDENT'S CERTIFICATION

15. In executing this CAFO, Respondent certifies that it has complied with AHERA and the AHERA Subpart E regulations at Sierra Charter School, and all other facilities under its control which are subject to AHERA requirements. The AMP for the above-listed school documents that Sierra Charter School currently contains no asbestos-containing building materials. Respondent certifies that all accounting of the costs incurred by Respondent in complying with AHERA and the AHERA Subpart E regulations provided to EPA are true and accurate.

G. CIVIL ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY

16. Respondent consents to the assessment of a penalty in the amount of **TWO THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$2,700)**, as specified in this Paragraph as final settlement and complete satisfaction of the civil claims against Respondent arising from the facts alleged in Section I.C. of the CAFO and under the Act, as alleged in Section I.C. of the CAFO. **As the Respondent's EPA-approved costs of compliance with AHERA and the Subpart E regulations exceeds the civil penalty amount, the costs of compliance already expended by Respondent shall represent full payment of penalty.**

17. Issuance of this CAFO does not constitute a waiver by EPA of its right to enforce the terms of this CAFO or to seek other civil or criminal relief for violations, if any, of any provision of federal law not specifically settled by this Consent Agreement. Nothing in this CAFO shall relieve Respondent of its duty to comply with all applicable provisions of the Act, rules promulgated thereunder, and other Federal, state or local laws or statutes.

18. The provisions of this CAFO shall be binding on Respondent and on Respondent's officers, directors, employees, agents, servants, authorized representatives, successors, and

assigns.

19. Each party shall bear its own costs, fees, and disbursements in this action.

20. This Consent Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the Respondent and EPA. This Consent Agreement and Final Order is for the purpose of fully and finally settling the civil claims against Respondent arising from the facts alleged in section I.C. of this CAFO. Full payment of the civil penalty as set forth in this Consent Agreement and the Final Order shall constitute full settlement and satisfaction of civil penalty liability against Respondent for the violations alleged in Section I.C. of this CAFO.

21. In accordance with 40 C.F.R. §§ 22.18(b)(3) and 22.31(b), the effective date of this CAFO shall be the date on which the accompanying Final Order, having been signed by the Regional Judicial Officer, is filed.

22. The undersigned representatives of each party to this Consent Agreement certify that each is duly authorized by the party whom he or she represents to enter into the terms and bind that party to it.

SIERRA CHARTER SCHOOL:

Date: 4/22/13 By: Sherry Iida
Name: Sherry Iida
Title: Business Director

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY:

Date: 5/21/13 By:

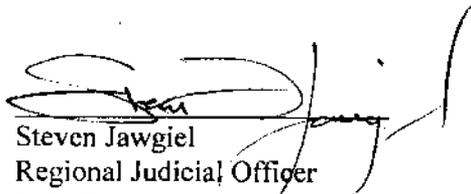


ENRIQUE MANZANILLA
Director, Communities and Ecosystems Division
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX

II. FINAL ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that this Consent Agreement and Final Order be entered and that Respondent shall comply with the terms set forth in the Consent Agreement.

Date: 06/03/13


Steven Jawgiel
Regional Judicial Officer
U.S. EPA, Region IX

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that the original and one copy of the fully executed Consent Agreement and Final Order Pursuant to 40 C.F.R §§ 22.13 and 22.18 (Docket No. TSCA-9-2013- *0005*) against the Sierra Charter School, was filed this day with the Regional Hearing Clerk, U.S. EPA, Region IX, 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, California 94105, and that a true and correct copy of the same was sent to Respondent at the following address:

Ms. Sherry Iida
Business Director/CFO
Sierra Charter School
1931 North Fine Avenue
Fresno, CA 93727

Certified Mail No. 7003 3110 0006 1997 3682


Bryan Goodwin
Regional Hearing Clerk
United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX

Date: *6/10/13*



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Certified Mail No. 7003 3110 0006 1997 3682
Return Receipt Requested

Re: TSCA-09-2013- 0008

Date: JUN 10 2013

Ms. Sherry Iida
Business Director/CFO
Sierra Charter School
1931 North Fine Avenue
Fresno, CA 93727

Dear Ms. Iida:

Enclosed please find your copy of the fully executed Consent Agreement and Final Order which contains the terms of the settlement reached with Margaret Alkon of the EPA Region 9 Office of Regional Counsel. Your completion of all actions enumerated in the Consent Agreement and Final Order will close this case. If you have any questions, please contact Ron Tsuchiya at (415) 947-4168.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Enrique Mazanilla".

Enrique Mazanilla, Director
Communities and Ecosystems Division

Enclosure