

**FILED**

January 29, 2024

12:45PM

**U.S. EPA REGION 7  
HEARING CLERK**

**U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 7  
11201 RENNER BOULEVARD  
LENEXA, KANSAS 66219**

**BEFORE THE ADMINISTRATOR**

**In the Matter of:**

**Strategic Contracting Solutions,**

**Respondent**

)  
)  
)  
)  
)  
)

**Docket No. TSCA-07-2023-0036**

**CONSENT AGREEMENT AND FINAL ORDER**

**Preliminary Statement**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7 (“EPA” or “Complainant”), and Strategic Contracting Solutions (“Respondent”) has agreed to a settlement of this action before the filing of a complaint, and thus this action is simultaneously commenced and concluded pursuant to Rules 22.13(b) and 22.18(b)(2) of the Consolidated Rules of Practice Governing the Administrative Assessment of Civil Penalties and the Revocation/Termination or Suspension of Permits, 40 C.F.R. §§ 22.13(b) and 22.18(b)(2).

**Jurisdiction**

1. This proceeding is an administrative action for the assessment of civil penalties initiated pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Toxic Substances Control Act (“TSCA”), 15 U.S.C. § 2615(a).
2. This Consent Agreement and Final Order serves as notice that the EPA has reason to believe that Respondent has violated Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689, by failing to comply with the regulatory requirements of 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart E, *Lead-Based Paint Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule*, promulgated pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §§ 2682, 2686 and 2687.

**Parties**

3. Complainant is the Chief of the Chemical Branch, Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division, Region 7, as duly delegated by the Administrator of EPA.
4. Respondent is Strategic Contracting Solutions, a business in good standing under the laws of the state of Missouri and doing business in the state of Missouri.

## Statutory and Regulatory Background

5. Congress passed the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992 (the “Act”), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4851 to 4856, to address the need to control exposure to lead-based paint hazards. One of the stated purposes of the Act is to implement a broad program to reduce lead-based paint hazards in the Nation’s housing stock. 42 U.S.C. § 4851a(2). The Act amended TSCA by adding *Title IV—Lead Exposure Reduction*, Sections 401 to 412, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2681 to 2692.

6. Section 402 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2682, requires that the Administrator of EPA promulgate regulations governing the training and certification of individuals and contractors engaged in lead-based paint activities, including renovation of target housing. Section 406 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2686, requires that the Administrator of EPA promulgate regulations requiring persons who perform for compensation a renovation of target housing to provide a lead hazard information pamphlet to the owner and occupant prior to commencing the renovation. Section 407 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2687, requires that the regulations promulgated pursuant to TSCA include recordkeeping and reporting requirements to insure effective implementation.

7. Pursuant to Section 402(a) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2682(a), the EPA promulgated regulations at 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart L, *Lead Based Paint Activities*. *See Lead; Requirements for Lead-Based Paint Activities in Target Housing and Child-Occupied Facilities*, 61 Fed. Reg. 45778, 45813 (Aug. 29, 1996). Pursuant to Section 406(b) and Section 407 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2686(b) and 2687, the EPA promulgated regulations at 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart E, *Residential Property Renovation*. *See Lead; Requirements for Hazard Education Before Renovation of Target Housing*, 63 Fed. Reg. 29908, 29919 (June 1, 1998). Finally, pursuant to Section 402(c)(3) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2682(c)(3), the EPA amended and re-codified regulations at 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subparts E and L, and added additional regulations at 40 C.F.R. Subpart L (“Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule”). *See Lead; Renovation, Repair, and Painting Program*, 73 Fed. Reg. 21692, 21758 (Mar. 31, 2008).

8. The regulations set forth at 40 C.F.R., Part 745, Subpart E, *Residential Property Renovation*, including the Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule, require that owners and occupants of target housing and child-occupied facilities receive information on lead-based paint hazards before renovations begin, establish work practice standards for renovations that disturb painted surfaces in target housing and child-occupied facilities and requires that firms and individuals performing, offering, or claiming to perform such renovations are properly trained and obtain EPA certification.

9. The requirements set forth in the regulations at 40 C.F.R., Part 745, Subpart E, *Residential Property Renovation*, apply to all renovations performed for compensation in target housing and child-occupied facilities, unless otherwise excluded as set forth in 40 C.F.R. § 745.82.

10. The regulation at 40 C.F.R. § 745.83 defines “firm” as a company, partnership, corporation, sole proprietorship or individual doing business, association, or other business entity; a Federal, State, Tribal, or local government agency; or a nonprofit organization.

11. The regulation at 40 C.F.R. § 745.83 defines “person” as any natural or judicial person including any individual, corporation, partnership, or association; any Indian Tribe, State, or political subdivision thereof; any interstate body; and any department, agency, or instrumentality of the Federal Government.

12. The regulation at 40 C.F.R. § 745.83 defines “renovation” as the modification of any existing structure, or portion thereof, that results in the disturbance of painted surfaces, unless that activity is performed as part of an abatement as defined by 40 C.F.R. § 745.223. The term renovation includes, but is not limited to, the removal, modification, or repair of painted surfaces or painted components (*e.g.*, modification of painted doors, surface restoration, window repair, surface preparation activity (such as sanding, scraping, or other such activities that may generate paint dust)); the removal of building components (*e.g.*, walls, ceilings, plumbing, windows); weatherization projects (*e.g.*, cutting holes in painted surfaces to install blown-in insulation or to gain access to attics, planing thresholds to install weather stripping); and interim controls that disturb painted surfaces.

13. The regulation at 40 C.F.R. § 745.83 defines “renovator” as an individual who either performs or directs workers who perform renovations. A certified renovator is a renovator who has successfully completed a renovator course accredited by EPA or an EPA-authorized State or Tribal program.

14. Section 401(17) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2681(17), defines “target housing” as any housing constructed prior to 1978, except housing for the elderly or persons with disabilities or any zero-bedroom dwelling (unless any child who is less than six years of age resides or is expected to reside in such housing).

15. The regulation at 40 C.F.R. § 745.87(a) provides that failure or refusal to comply with any provision of 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart E, is a violation of Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689. Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689, provides that it shall be unlawful for any person to fail to comply with, *inter alia*, any provision of 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart E.

16. Section 16(a) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2615(a), as amended, and 40 C.F.R. § 745.87(d), authorize a civil penalty of not more than \$37,500 per day for violations of Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689. The Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015, 28 U.S.C. § 2461, and implementing regulations at 40 C.F.R. Part 19, increased these statutory maximum penalties to \$46,989 for violations that occur after November 2, 2015, and for which penalties are assessed on or after January 6, 2023.

### **General Factual Allegations**

17. On or about June 23, 2022, and pursuant to Section 11 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2610, representatives of the EPA conducted an inspection at 1121 North Park Avenue in Springfield, MO (“the Property”) to evaluate Respondent’s compliance with TSCA and the requirements of the Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule (“EPA inspection”). A copy of the inspection report was sent to Respondent on October 19, 2022.

18. Respondent is, and at all times referred to herein was, a business doing business in the state of Missouri.

19. Respondent, at all times referred to herein, was a “person” and “firm” as defined by 40 C.F.R. § 745.83.

20. At the time of the EPA inspection, and at all times relevant to this Consent Agreement and Final Order, Respondent was engaged in a “renovation” of the Property as defined by 40 C.F.R. § 745.83. Respondent was engaged in various renovation activities of the Property.

21. At all times relevant to this Consent Agreement and Final Order, Respondent’s renovation was a “renovation for compensation” per 40 C.F.R. § 745.82(a).

22. At all times relevant to this Consent Agreement and Final Order, the Property was “target housing” as defined by Section 401(17) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2681(17). The EPA inspection and subsequent investigation revealed that the Property was built in 1948.

23. At the time of the EPA inspection, Respondent was a subcontractor hired by DRS Contracting, LLC.

24. At the time of the EPA inspection, Respondent was not a certified firm.

25. As a result of the EPA inspection and additional information obtained by the agency, Complainant has determined that violations of the Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule, 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart E, and Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689, occurred as a result of Respondent’s renovation activities at the Property.

### **Allegations of Violation**

26. Complainant hereby states and alleges that Respondent has violated TSCA and federal regulations promulgated thereunder as follows:

#### **Count 1**

27. The facts stated in Paragraphs 17 through 25 above are herein incorporated.

28. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.89(a)(1), firms that perform renovations for compensation must apply to EPA for certification to perform renovations. With certain exceptions not relevant here, 40 C.F.R. § 745.81(a)(2)(ii) prohibits firms from performing, offering, or claiming to perform renovations without certification from EPA in target housing or child-occupied facilities.

29. The EPA inspection revealed that Respondent failed to apply for and obtain EPA certification prior to commencing the renovation for compensation on the Property.

30. Respondent's failure to apply to the EPA for certification pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.89(a)(1) prior to performance of the renovation on the Property is a violation of 40 C.F.R. § 745.81(a)(2)(ii). Therefore, under 40 C.F.R. § 745.87(a), Respondent violated Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689.

Count 2

31. The facts stated in Paragraphs 17 through 25 above are herein incorporated.

32. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(1), firms must post signs clearly defining the work area and warning occupants and other persons not involved in renovation activities to remain outside of the work area. To the extent practicable, these signs must be in the primary language of the occupants. These signs must be posted before beginning the renovation and must remain in place and readable until the renovation and the post-renovation cleaning verification have been completed.

33. The EPA inspection revealed that Respondent failed to post signs visible from the exterior clearly defining the work area and warning other persons not involved in the renovation activities to remain outside of the work area at the Property.

34. Respondent's failure to post signs clearly defining the work area and warning persons not involved in the renovation activities to remain outside of the work area is a violation of 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(1), and under 40 C.F.R. § 745.87(a), is a violation of Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689.

Count 3

35. The facts stated in Paragraphs 17 through 25 above are herein incorporated.

36. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(2)(i)(B), firms must close and cover all ducts and openings in the work area with taped-down plastic sheeting or other impermeable material.

37. The EPA inspection revealed that Respondent failed to close and cover ducts and HVAC openings with taped-down plastic sheeting or other impermeable material.

38. Respondent's failure to close and cover all ducts and openings in the work area is a violation of 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(2)(i)(B), and under 40 C.F.R. § 745.87(a), is a violation of Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689.

Count 4

39. The facts stated in Paragraphs 17 through 25 above are herein incorporated.

40. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(2)(i)(C), firms must close windows and doors in the work area. Doors must be covered with plastic sheeting or other impermeable material.

Doors used as an entrance to the work area must be covered with plastic sheeting or other impermeable material in a manner that allows workers to pass through while confining dust and debris to the work area.

41. The EPA inspection revealed that Respondent failed to either close or cover several interior doors and the front door to the house at the Property.

42. Respondent's failure to close and/or cover several doors at the Property is a violation of 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(2)(i)(C), and under 40 C.F.R. § 745.87(a), is a violation of Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689.

Count 5

43. The facts stated in Paragraphs 17 through 25 above are herein incorporated.

44. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(2)(i)(D), firms must cover the floor surface, including installed carpet, with taped-down plastic sheeting or other impermeable material in the work area 6 feet beyond the perimeter of surfaces undergoing renovation or a sufficient distance to contain the dust, whichever is greater. Floor containment measures may stop at the edge of the vertical barrier when using a vertical containment system consisting of impermeable barriers that extend from the floor to the ceiling and are tightly sealed at joints with the floor, ceiling and walls.

45. The EPA inspection revealed that Respondent failed to cover the floor in the work area 6 feet beyond the perimeter of surfaces at the Property.

46. Respondent's failure to cover the floor in the work area at the Property is a violation of 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(2)(i)(D), and under 40 C.F.R. § 745.87(a), is a violation of Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689.

Count 6

47. The facts stated in Paragraphs 17 through 25 above are herein incorporated.

48. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(4)(i), waste from renovation activities must be contained to prevent releases of dust and debris before the waste is removed from the work area for storage or disposal. If a chute is used to remove waste from the work area, it must be covered.

49. The EPA inspection revealed that Respondent failed to contain debris, waste, and paint chips around the exterior of the house.

50. Respondent's failure to contain waste before removing it from the work area is a violation of 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(4)(i), and under 40 C.F.R. § 745.87(a), is a violation of Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689

Count 7

51. The facts stated in Paragraphs 17 through 25 above are herein incorporated.

52. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(4)(ii), at the conclusion of each work day and at the conclusion of the renovation, waste that has been collected from renovation activities must be stored under containment, in an enclosure, or behind a barrier that prevents release of dust and debris out of the work area and prevents access to dust and debris.

53. The EPA inspection revealed that Respondent failed to cover or contain the waste in the dumpster and on the ground at the end of each work day.

54. Respondent's failure to cover or contain waste at the conclusion of each work day is a violation of 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a)(4)(ii), and under 40 C.F.R. § 745.87(a), is a violation of Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689

**CONSENT AGREEMENT**

55. For the purpose of this proceeding, as required by 40 C.F.R. § 22.18(b)(2), Respondent:

- (a) admits the jurisdictional allegations set forth herein;
- (b) neither admits nor denies the specific factual allegations stated herein;
- (c) consents to the assessment of a civil penalty, as stated herein;
- (d) consents to the issuance of any specified compliance or corrective action order;
- (e) consents to any conditions specified herein;
- (f) consents to any stated Permit Action;
- (g) waives any right to contest the allegations set forth herein; and
- (h) waives its rights to appeal the Final Order accompanying this Consent Agreement.

56. Respondent consents to the issuance of this Consent Agreement and Final Order and consents for the purposes of settlement to the payment of the civil penalty specified herein.

57. Respondent and EPA agree to conciliate this matter without the necessity of a formal hearing and to bear their respective costs and attorneys' fees.

58. Respondent consents to receiving an electronic copy of the filed Consent Agreement and Final Order at the following e-mail address: [dscs.spr@gmail.com](mailto:dscs.spr@gmail.com).

### **Penalty Payment**

59. Respondent agrees that, in settlement of the claims alleged herein, Respondent shall pay a mitigated civil penalty of zero dollars (\$0) based on a substantiated ability to pay claim. EPA has considered the appropriateness of the penalty pursuant to Section 16(a)(2)(B) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. 2615(a)(2)(B), and has determined that the appropriate penalty for the violations is \$45,354. This penalty has been adjusted to reflect Respondent's size of business. However, pursuant to the statutory requirement that EPA consider a Respondent's ability to pay, Respondent has demonstrated that it is unable to pay any penalty in this matter. Because of Respondent's inability to pay the penalty, therefore, Complainant conditionally agrees to resolve the claims alleged herein.

### **Effect of Settlement and Reservation of Rights**

60. Full payment of the penalty proposed in this Consent Agreement shall only resolve Respondent's liability for federal civil penalties for the violations alleged herein. Complainant reserves the right to take any enforcement action with respect to any other violations of TSCA or any other applicable law.

61. The effect of settlement described in the immediately preceding paragraph is conditioned upon the accuracy of Respondent's representations to the EPA, as memorialized in paragraph directly below.

62. Respondent certifies by the signing of this Consent Agreement that it is presently in compliance with all requirements of TSCA and its implementing regulations.

63. Full payment of the penalty proposed in this Consent Agreement shall not in any case affect the right of the Agency or the United States to pursue appropriate injunctive or other equitable relief or criminal sanctions for any violations of law. This Consent Agreement and Final Order does not waive, extinguish or otherwise affect Respondent's obligation to comply with all applicable provisions of TSCA and regulations promulgated thereunder.

64. Complainant reserves the right to enforce the terms and conditions of this Consent Agreement and Final Order.

65. This CAFO constitutes a "prior such violation" as that term is used in EPA's Interim Final Consolidated Enforcement Response and Penalty Policy for the Pre-Renovation Education Rule; Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule; and Lead-Based Paint Activities Rule to determine Respondent's "history of prior such violations" under Section 16(a)(2)(B) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2615(a)(2)(B).



### **General Provisions**

66. By signing this Consent Agreement, the undersigned representative of Respondent certifies that he or she is fully authorized to execute and enter into the terms and conditions of this Consent Agreement and has the legal capacity to bind the party he or she represents to this Consent Agreement.

67. This Consent Agreement shall not dispose of the proceeding without a final order from the Regional Judicial Officer or Regional Administrator ratifying the terms of this Consent Agreement. This Consent Agreement and Final Order shall be effective upon the filing of the Final Order by the Regional Hearing Clerk for EPA, Region 7. Unless otherwise stated, all time periods stated herein shall be calculated in calendar days from such date.

68. The penalty specified herein shall represent civil penalties assessed by EPA and shall not be deductible for purposes of Federal, State and local taxes.

69. This Consent Agreement and Final Order shall apply to and be binding upon Respondent and Respondent's agents, successors and/or assigns. Respondent shall ensure that all contractors, employees, consultants, firms, or other persons or entities acting for Respondent with respect to matters included herein comply with the terms of this Consent Agreement and Final Order.

**RESPONDENT**  
**Strategic Contracting Solutions**

Richard Berry  
Signature

11-29-23  
Date

Richard Berry  
Printed Name

Owner  
Title

**COMPLAINANT**  
**U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

---

David Cozad  
Director  
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division

---

Date

---

Katherine Kacsur  
Office of Regional Counsel

---

Date

**FINAL ORDER**

Pursuant to Section 16(a) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2615(a), and the Consolidated Rules of Practice Governing the Administrative Assessment of Civil Penalties and the Revocation/Termination or Suspension of Permits, 40 C.F.R. Part 22, the foregoing Consent Agreement resolving this matter is hereby ratified and incorporated by reference into this Final Order.

Respondent is ORDERED to comply with all of the terms of the Consent Agreement. In accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 22.31(b), the effective date of the foregoing Consent Agreement and this Final Order is the date on which this Final Order is filed with the Regional Hearing Clerk.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Karina Borromeo  
Regional Judicial Officer

Date

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**  
(For EPA use only.)

I certify that that a true and correct copy of the foregoing Consent Agreement and Final Order in the matter of Strategic Contracting Solutions, EPA Docket No. TSCA-07-2023-0036, was sent this day in the following manner to the addressees:

Copy via E-mail to Complainant:

Katherine Kacsur  
Attorney for Complainant  
*kacsur.katherine@epa.gov*

Christine Hoard  
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division  
*hoard.christine@epa.gov*

Milady Peters  
Office of Regional Counsel  
*peters.milady@epa.gov*

Copy via E-mail to Respondent:

Richard Berry  
Owner, Strategic Contracting Solutions  
*dscs.spr@gmail.com*

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed