

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 2

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 In the Matter of :  
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**Taras Home Designs, LLC** : CONSENT AGREEMENT  
**d/b/a CertaPro Painters of Morristown** : AND  
 : FINAL ORDER  
 :  
 Respondent : Docket No.  
 : TSCA-02-2026-9168  
 :  
 Proceeding under Section 16(a) of :  
 the Toxic Substances Control Act :  
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**PRELIMINARY STATEMENT**

This administrative proceeding was commenced pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Toxic Substances Control Act, 15 U.S.C. § 2615(a), as amended ("TSCA"), and the Consolidated Rules of Practice, 40 C.F.R. Part 22 ("Consolidated Rules").

Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 22.13(b) of the Consolidated Rules, where the parties agree to settlement of one or more causes of action before the filing of an Administrative Complaint, a proceeding may be simultaneously commenced and concluded by the issuance of a Consent Agreement and Final Order ("CAFO") pursuant to 40 C.F.R. §§ 22.18(b)(2) and (3).

The Acting Director of the Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2 (hereinafter "the EPA" or "Complainant") alleges that Taras Home Designs, LLC, d/b/a CertaPro Painters of Morristown, NJ (hereinafter "Respondent" or "CertaPro of Morristown") violated the requirements of Sections 15 and 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2615 and 2689, by failing to comply with the federal regulations

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promulgated pursuant to Subchapter IV of STCA, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2681-2692, and set forth at 40 C.F.R. Part 745, including the requirements for Residential Property Renovation at 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart E (the “Renovation, Repair and Painting (“RRP”) Rule).

The EPA and Respondent agree that settling this matter by entering into this CAFO is an appropriate means of resolving this matter without further litigation. No formal or adjudicated findings of fact or conclusions of law have been made.

**EPA FINDINGS OF FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

1. Respondent is a limited liability company organized under the laws of and registered in the State of New Jersey.
2. Respondent’s primary place of business is located at 45 South Park Place, Suite 352, Morristown, New Jersey 07960.
3. At all times relevant, Respondent is and was a “Firm” performing “Renovation” in properties in New Jersey that include “Target Housing,” as those terms are defined by 40 C.F.R. § 745.83 and 15 U.S.C. § 2681(17).
4. At all times relevant, Respondent is and was a Firm subject to the RRP Rule. Respondent sought and obtained initial certification, NAT-F118369-1, from the EPA as a firm on December 4, 2013, which expired on December 18, 2018. Respondent obtained certification again, NAT-F258499-1, on January 9, 2024, which expires on January 23, 2029.
5. On June 26, 2024, the EPA issued a TSCA Notice of Inspection letter via email to Respondent notifying that the EPA would conduct an inspection to determine Respondent’s compliance with the RRP Rule.

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6. On July 15, 2024, the EPA conducted an on-site RRP inspection and requested documentation for a total of eight (8) renovation jobs – both pre-selected and randomly chosen - from a list of 52 pre-1978 property renovations performed between 2020 and 2024.

7. Based on the information obtained during and after the inspection, and a review of pertinent records, the EPA determined that Respondent had violated the following provisions of the RRP Rule:

- a. 40 C.F.R. § 745.89 – Failure to obtain firm certification from the EPA prior to performing renovations for compensation pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.81(a)(2)(ii) at 52 residences (target housing). Firm certification is a key requirement to ensure the training of individuals and the use of lead-safe work practices.
- b. 40 C.F.R. § 745.86(b)(6) – Failure to maintain records that on-the-job training was provided by a certified renovator for the renovation project conducted at a residence on Hamilton Road in Morristown, NJ. This documentation allows the EPA to verify that the workers have been trained on lead-safe work practices by a certified renovator prior to the start of a renovation project.
- c. 40 C.F.R. § 745.84(d) – Failure to obtain a written acknowledgement prior to the start of the renovation for the renovation project conducted at a residence on Colonial Drive in Morristown, NJ. This acknowledgement allows the EPA to ascertain that the owner of the target housing has been informed of the risks of lead-based paint prior to the start of a renovation project.

8. Each of Respondent’s failures to comply with the requirements of the RRP Rule as identified above, constitutes an independent violation of TSCA and the Act for which

penalties may be individually assessed.

9. On May 8, 2025, the EPA sent Respondent a Show Cause letter via Certified Mail setting out the alleged violations of RRP requirements and extending an offer to meet.

Following the issuance of the May 8, 2025, letter, Respondent's counsel contacted the EPA on May 22, 2025, to request an opportunity to meet. The Parties met on June 12, 2025, and communicated on multiple occasions between June through September 2025. During these communications, Respondent demonstrated a commitment to compliance with the RRP Rule.

10. On September 18, 2025, the parties reached a settlement in principle and agreed to enter into this Consent Agreement.

#### **CONSENT AGREEMENT**

Based on the foregoing, and pursuant to Section 16(a) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2615(a), and in accordance with the Consolidated Rules of Practice, it is hereby agreed by and between the parties hereto, and voluntarily and knowingly accepted by Respondent, that Respondent shall comply with the following terms:

11. For the purposes of this Consent Agreement, Respondent: (a) admits the jurisdictional allegations of the Complaint, and neither admits nor denies the EPA's Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law in this Consent Agreement; (b) consents to the assessment of the civil penalty as set forth below; (c) consents to the issuance of the Final Order incorporating all provisions of this Consent Agreement; (d) consents to any conditions specified herein and (e) waives any right it might possess to obtain judicial or administrative review of the Final Order accompanying this Consent Agreement.

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12. Respondent agrees to hereinafter maintain compliance with all applicable statutory provisions of Subchapter IV of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. §§ 401-412, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2681-2692, and the implementing regulations codified at 40 C.F.R. Part 745.

**Certifications**

13. Respondent certifies that EPA has provided Respondent with information and compliance assistance regarding the requirements of the RRP Rule, codified at 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart E, and of its compliance obligations under the same.

14. Respondent certifies that, as of the date of execution of this CAFO, it is in compliance with the statutory provisions of Subchapter IV of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. §§ 401 – 412, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2681 – 2692, and the implementing regulations codified at 40 C.F.R. Part 745.

**Penalty**

15. Respondent agrees to pay a civil penalty in the amount of **SIXTEEN THOUSAND, EIGHT HUNDRED SIXTY-FIVE DOLLARS (\$16,865.00)** (“Assessed Penalty”) *on or before* thirty (30) days from the date the Final Order ratifying this Agreement is filed with the Regional Hearing Clerk (“Filing Date”).

16. Any payments required to be made by Respondent under this agreement including, without limitation, the Assessed Penalty and any late interest and/or fees (if applicable pursuant to Paragraph 19), and other charges due by using any method, or combination of appropriate methods, as provided on the EPA website:

<https://www.epa.gov/financial/makepayment>. For additional instructions see:

<https://www.epa.gov/financial/additional-instructions-making-payments-epa>.

17. When making a payment Respondent shall:

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a. Identify each payment with Respondent's name and the docket number of this Agreement: *Taras Designs LLC dba CertaPro of Morristown Company, TSCA-02-2026-9168.*

b. Concurrently with any payment or within twenty-four (24) hours of any payment, Respondent shall serve proof of any payment to the following persons by e-mail:

Max Kromer, Enforcement Officer  
USEPA  
Waste and Chemical Enforcement Division  
[Kromer.Maxwell@epa.gov](mailto:Kromer.Maxwell@epa.gov)

and

United States Environmental Protection Agency  
Cincinnati Finance Center  
[CINWD\\_AcctsReceivable@epa.gov](mailto:CINWD_AcctsReceivable@epa.gov)

"Proof of Payment" means, as applicable, a copy of the check, confirmation of credit card or debit card payment, wire or confirmation of automated clearinghouse transfer, and any other information required to demonstrate that payment has been made according to EPA requirements, in the amount due, and identified with the appropriate docket number and Respondent's name.

18. Interest, Charges, and Penalties on Late Payments. Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 3717, 31 C.F.R. § 901.9, and 40 C.F.R. § 13.11, if Respondent fails to timely pay the full amount of the Assessed Penalty per this Agreement, the EPA is authorized to recover the following amounts:

a. *Interest.* Interest begins to accrue from Filing Date. If the Assessed Penalty is paid in full within thirty (30) days, interest accrued is waived. If the Assessed Penalty is not paid in full within thirty (30) days, interest will continue to accrue until the

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Assessed Penalty, as well as any interest, penalties, and other charges are paid in full. To protect the interests of the United States the rate of interest is set at the IRS standard underpayment rate, any lower rate would fail to provide Respondent adequate incentive for timely payment.

b. *Handling Charges.* Respondent will be assessed monthly a charge to cover EPA's costs of processing and handling overdue debts. If Respondent fails to pay the Assessed Penalty in accordance with this Agreement, the EPA will assess a charge to cover the costs of handling any unpaid amounts for the first thirty (30) day period after the Filing Date. Additional handling charges will be assessed every thirty (30) days, or any portion thereof, until the unpaid portion of the Assessed Penalty as well as any accrued interest, penalties, and other charges are paid in full.

c. *Late Payment Penalty.* A late payment penalty of six percent (6%) per annum, will be assessed monthly on all debts, including the Assessed Penalty, interest, penalties, and other charges, that remain delinquent more than ninety (90) days. Any such amounts will accrue from the Filing Date.

19. Late Penalty Actions. In addition to the amounts described in the prior Paragraph, if Respondent fails to timely pay the Assessed Penalty, interest, or other charges and penalties per this Agreement, the EPA may take additional actions. Such actions the EPA may take include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Refer the debt to a credit reporting agency or a collection agency, per 40 C.F.R. §§ 13.13 and 13.14.
- b. Collect the debt by administrative offset (*i.e.*, the withholding of money

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payable by the United States government to, or held by the United States government for, a person to satisfy the debt the person owes the United States government), which includes, but is not limited to, referral to the Internal Revenue Service for offset against income tax refunds, per 40 C.F.R. Part 13, Subparts C and H.

c. Suspend or revoke Respondent's licenses or other privileges or suspend or disqualify Respondent from doing business with the EPA or engaging in programs the EPA sponsors or funds, per 40 C.F.R. § 13.17.

d. Refer this matter to the United States Department of Justice for litigation and collection, per 40 C.F.R. § 13.33.

20. Allocation of Payments. Pursuant to 31 C.F.R. § 901.9(f) and 40 C.F.R. § 13.11(d), a partial payment of debt will be applied first to outstanding handling charges, second to late penalty charges, third to accrued interest, and last to the principal that is the outstanding Assessed Penalty amount.

21. Tax Treatment of Penalties. Penalties, interest, and other charges paid pursuant to this Agreement shall not be deductible for purposes of federal taxes.

22. Respondent explicitly and knowingly agrees to pay the Assessed Penalty in accordance with the terms of this CAFO.

### **General Provisions**

23. Nothing in this document is intended nor shall be construed to waive, prejudice or otherwise affect the right of the EPA, or the United States, from pursuing any appropriate remedy, sanction or penalty prescribed by law against Respondent, if Respondent makes any

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material misrepresentations or provides materially false information herein or in any document submitted pursuant to this Consent Agreement.

24. Respondent's full and timely payment of the Assessed Penalty shall resolve Respondent's liability for federal civil penalties for the violations described in Paragraphs 7 and 8. Nothing herein shall affect the authority of the EPA (or the United States on behalf of EPA) to pursue appropriate injunctive or other equitable relief or criminal sanctions for any violations of law.

25. By signing this Consent Agreement, Respondent waives any rights or defenses that Respondent has or may have for this matter to be resolved in federal court, including but not limited to any right to a jury trial, and waives any right to challenge the lawfulness of the final order accompanying the Consent Agreement.

26. Respondent agrees not to contest the validity or any term of this CAFO in any action brought: a) by the United States, including the EPA, to enforce this CAFO; or b) to enforce a judgment relating to this CAFO. Any failure by Respondent to perform fully any requirement herein will be considered a violation of this CAFO and may subject Respondent to a civil judicial action by the United States to enforce the provisions of this CAFO.

27. This CAFO does not waive, extinguish, or otherwise affect Respondent's obligation to comply with all applicable provisions of TSCA and the regulations promulgated thereunder, as well as all applicable federal, state, or local laws, rules, or regulations, nor shall it be construed to be a ruling on, or a determination of, any issue related to any federal, state, or local permit.

28. Unless the EPA contact identified in Paragraph 17, above, is later advised

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otherwise in writing, the EPA shall send by electronic mail any written communication related to this matter to [matthew.karmel@offitkurman.com](mailto:matthew.karmel@offitkurman.com), and [rwebber@certapro.com](mailto:rwebber@certapro.com). However, in cases where electronic mail is not feasible given document type or size, such correspondence will be mailed to the following:

Offit Kurman, P.A.  
ATTN: Matthew Karmel, Esq.  
21 Main Street, Suite 158  
Hackensack, NJ 07601

And

Taras Home Designs, d/b/a CertaPro Painters of Morristown  
ATTN: Richard Webber  
35 Pine Street  
Morristown, NJ 07960

29. Respondent consents to service of the fully-executed CAFO by electronic mail to the addressees listed in the preceding paragraph, which may be effectuated by any employee of the EPA other than the Regional Hearing Clerk.

30. Respondent has read the CAFO, understands its terms, finds it to be reasonable, and consents to its issuance and its terms. Respondent agrees that all terms of settlement are set forth herein.

31. If any provision or authority of the Order or the application of the Order to Respondent is held by federal judicial authority to be invalid, the remainder of this Order shall remain in full force and effect and shall not be affected by such a holding.

32. Each party shall bear its own costs and fees in this matter.

33. The provisions of this CAFO shall be binding upon Respondent, its officials, authorized representatives, and successors or assigns.

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34. Respondent's signatory certifies to possessing due and full authorization to: (a) enter into and ratify this CAFO and all the terms, provisions, and requirements set forth in this CAFO; and (b) bind Respondent, its officials, authorized representatives, and successors or assigns to comply with and abide by all the terms, provisions, and requirements thereof.

35. The Parties agree that this Agreement may be signed electronically and in part and counterpart by each signatory.

**Respondent Taras Home Designs, LLC d/b/a CertaPro Painters of Morristown**

RESPONDENT:	<b>Richard Webber</b> _____
	(SIGNATURE)
NAME:	Richard webber _____
	(PLEASE PRINT)
TITLE:	owner _____
DATE:	3/4/2026 _____

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**Environmental Protection Agency**

COMPLAINANT:

\_\_\_\_\_

Douglas Mckenna, Acting Director  
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2  
290 Broadway, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10007-1866

**FINAL ORDER**

The Regional Judicial Officer of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2, concurs in the foregoing Consent Agreement in the case of In the Matter of Taras Home Designs, LLC d/b/a CertaPro Painters of Morristown, Docket Number TSCA-02-2026-9168. Said Consent Agreement, having been duly accepted and entered into by the parties, is hereby ratified, incorporated into, and issued as this Final Order. The effective date of this Order shall be the date of filing with the Regional Hearing Clerk of EPA, Region 2 (40 C.F.R. § 22.31(b)). This Final Order is being entered pursuant to the authority of 40 C.F.R. § 22.18(b)(3) and shall constitute an order issued under Section 16 of the Toxic Substances Control Act, 15 U.S.C. § 2615.

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Dana P. Friedman  
Regional Judicial Officer  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2  
290 Broadway, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007-1866