

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500
Dallas, Texas 75270**

In the Matter of	§	
	§	
The Pat Burke Company,	§	Docket No. TSCA-06-2020-6136
	§	
Respondent.	§	

CONSENT AGREEMENT AND FINAL ORDER

Preliminary Statement

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6 (EPA or Complainant), and The Pat Burke Company, doing business as The Burke Company (Respondent), have 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.

Parties

3. Complainant is the Director of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division of the EPA, Region 6, as duly delegated by the Administrator of the EPA and the Regional Administrator, EPA, Region 6.

4. Respondent is The Pat Burke Company, a company registered in and conducting business in the state of Texas.

Statutory and Regulatory Background

5. TSCA was amended with the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4851 to 4856, with the addition of Title IV – Lead Exposure Reduction, Section 401 to 412 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. §§ 2681 to 2692. 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. § 4851.

6. Pursuant to Sections 402, 406, and 407 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2682, 2686, and 2687, the EPA promulgated the Lead, Renovation, Repair and Painting Program (RRP) Rule at 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart E - Residential Property Renovation, to ensure that owners and occupants of target housing and child-occupied facilities receive information on lead-based paint hazards before renovations begin; and individuals and firms performing renovations are certified and following work practice standards during the renovations. 40 C.F.R. § 745.80.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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).

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. § 745.87(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.

12. 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 Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996, 31 U.S.C.

§ 3701, as amended, and 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 \$40,576 for violations that occur after November 2, 2015, and for which penalties are assessed on or after January 13, 2020.

EPA General Factual Allegations

13. On or about March 2, 2020, the EPA conducted an inspection pursuant to Section 11 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2610, to evaluate Respondent's compliance with TSCA and the RRP Rule.

14. Respondent is, and at all times referred to herein was, a "person" and "firm" as defined by 40 C.F.R. § 745.83.

15. At the time of the EPA inspection, and at all times relevant to this Consent Agreement and Final Order, Respondent was engaged in "renovations" as defined by 40 C.F.R. § 745.83.

16. Respondent performed "renovations... for compensation" per 40 C.F.R. § 745.82(a) at four (4) properties (Properties) that were "target housing" as defined by Section 401(17) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2681(17).

17. As a result of the EPA inspection and additional information obtained by the EPA, 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 Properties.

EPA Allegations of Violation

18. The facts stated in the EPA General Factual Allegations above are herein incorporated.

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

Count 1

20. 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 under 40 C.F.R. § 745.89 in target housing or child-occupied facilities. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.89(b)(1)(iii), a firm must be re-certified by EPA every 5 years and must not perform renovations if the firm fails to obtain recertification before the firm's current certification expires.

21. Respondent's firm certification expired on April 29, 2015 and was re-certified on April 24, 2020. During the time that Respondent's firm certification was expired, Respondent continued to perform renovations on target housing.

22. Respondent's failure to obtain firm re-certification when continuing to perform renovations after the initial firm certification expired is a violation of 40 C.F.R. § 745.81(a)(2)(ii) and Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689.

Count 2 - 5

23. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.89(d)(2), firms performing renovations must ensure that a certified renovator is assigned to each renovation performed by the firm and discharges all the certified renovator responsibilities identified in 40 C.F.R. § 745.90.

24. Respondent failed to assign a certified renovator to each of the four (4) renovations performed by the firm at the four (4) Properties.

25. Respondent's failures to assign a certified renovator to each of the renovations at the Properties are violations of 40 C.F.R. § 745.89(d)(2) and Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C.

§ 2689.

Counts 6 - 9

26. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.89(d)(3), firms must ensure that all renovations performed by the firm are performed in accordance with the work practice standards in 40 C.F.R. § 745.85.

27. Respondent failed to ensure that the four (4) renovations performed at each of the four (4) Properties were performed in accordance with the work practice standards in 40 C.F.R. § 745.85.

28. Respondent's failures to ensure that each of the renovations performed at the Properties were performed in accordance with the work practice standards in 40 C.F.R. § 745.85 are violations of 40 C.F.R. § 745.89(d)(3) and Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689.

Count 10 - 13

29. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.84(a)(1), no more than sixty (60) days before beginning renovation activities in any residential dwelling unit of target housing, the firm performing the renovation must provide the owner of the unit with the EPA pamphlet titled *Renovate Right: Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers and Schools*.

30. Respondent failed to provide each owner of the four (4) Properties with the EPA pamphlet prior to the beginning of each of the four (4) renovation activities.

31. Respondent's failures to provide the EPA pamphlet to the owners of the Properties prior to the beginning of the renovation activities are violations of 40 C.F.R. § 745.84(a)(1) and Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689.

Count 14 - 17

32. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.86(a), firms performing renovations must retain, and, if requested, make available to EPA all records necessary to demonstrate compliance with the RRP Rule for a period of 3 years following completion of the renovation.

33. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.86(b)(6), one of the records that must be retained for inspection is documentation of compliance with the requirements of 40 C.F.R. § 745.85, including documentation that a certified renovator was assigned to the project, that the certified renovator provided on-the-job training for all workers used on the project, that the certified renovator performed or directed workers who performed all of the tasks described in 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(a), and that the certified renovator performed the post-renovation cleaning verification described in 40 C.F.R. § 745.85(b).

34. Respondent failed to prepare and retain records documenting compliance with the requirements of 40 C.F.R. § 745.85 as required by 40 C.F.R. §§ 745.86(a) and 745.86(b)(6) for each of the four (4) renovations performed at the four (4) Properties.

35. Respondent's failures to prepare and retain records documenting compliance with the requirements of 40 C.F.R. § 745.85 for each of the four (4) renovations at the four (4) Properties are violations of 40 C.F.R. § 745.86(a) and 745.86(b)(6) and Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689.

CONSENT AGREEMENT

36. 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.

37. 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.

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

Penalty Payment

39. Respondent agrees that, in settlement of the claims alleged herein, Respondent shall pay a civil penalty of Forty-Two Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty-Nine Dollars (\$42,729), as set forth below.

40. 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 based on substantiated ability to pay information, the appropriate penalty for the violation is Forty-Two Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty-Nine Dollars (\$42,729) to be paid within ninety (90) days of the effective date of the Final Order, plus interest of One Hundred Forty-Two Dollars (\$142), for a total payment of Forty-Two Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy-One Dollars (\$42,871). Such payment shall identify Respondent by name and docket number and shall be by certified or cashier's check made payable to the "United States Treasury" and sent to:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Fines and Penalties
Cincinnati Finance Center
PO Box 979077
St. Louis, Missouri 63197-9000

or by alternate payment method described at <http://www.epa.gov/financial/makepayment>.

41. The payment terms included herein are based on certified statements submitted by Respondent to the EPA. Any false statement made in a certified statement may result in voiding the penalty and settlement of the claims alleged herein.

42. A copy of the check or other information confirming payment shall simultaneously be sent by electronic mail to the following:

Lorena S. Vaughn
Regional Hearing Clerk
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500 (ORC)
Dallas, Texas 75270-2102
vaughn.lorena@epa.gov; and

Stan Lancaster
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division
Toxics Enforcement Section
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500 (ECDST)
Dallas, Texas 75270-2101
lancaster.stan@epa.gov

43. Respondent understands that its failure to timely pay any portion of the civil penalty may result in the commencement of a civil action in Federal District Court to recover the full remaining balance, along with penalties and accumulated interest. In such case, interest shall begin to accrue on a civil or stipulated penalty from the date of delinquency until such civil or stipulated penalty and any accrued interest are paid in full. 31 C.F.R. § 901.9(b)(1). Interest will be assessed at a rate of the United States Treasury Tax and loan rates in accordance with 31

U.S.C. § 3717. Additionally, a charge will be assessed to cover the costs of debt collection including processing and handling costs, and a non-payment penalty charge of six percent (6%) per year compounded annually will be assessed on any portion of the debt which remains delinquent more than ninety (90) days after payment is due. 31 U.S.C. § 3717(e)(2).

Effect of Settlement and Reservation of Rights

44. 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.

45. 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.

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

47. 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.

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

General Provisions

49. By signing this Consent Agreement, the undersigned representative of Respondent certifies that it 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 it represents to this Consent Agreement.

50. 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 6. Unless otherwise stated, all time periods stated herein shall be calculated in calendar days from such date.

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

52. 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.

53. The EPA and Respondent agree to the use of electronic signatures for this matter. The EPA and Respondent further agree to electronic service of this Consent Agreement and Final Order by email to the following:

To EPA: *mills.clarissa@epa.gov*

To Respondent: *flores@guidaslavichflores.com*

RESPONDENT
THE PAT BURKE COMPANY

Date: 9/18/20

By: 

Signature

Jason Asmar

Print Name

President

Title

COMPLAINANT
U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Date: _____

Cheryl T. Seager
Director
Enforcement and
Compliance Assurance Division
U.S. EPA, Region 6

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.

This Final Order shall resolve only those causes of action alleged in the Consent Agreement. Nothing in this Final Order shall be construed to waive, extinguish, or otherwise affect Respondent's (or its officers, agents, servants, employees, successors, or assigns) obligation to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations, including the regulations that were the subject of this action.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Thomas Rucki
Regional Judicial Officer

9/25/2020
Date

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that that a true and correct copy of the foregoing Consent Agreement and Final Order was delivered to the Regional Hearing Clerk, U.S. EPA, Region 6, 1201 Elm Street, Dallas, Texas 75270-2102, and that a true and correct copy was sent this day in the following manner to the addressees:

Copy via Email to Complainant:

mills.clarissa@epa.gov

Copy via Email to Respondent:

flores@guidaslavichflores.com

Signed
U.S. EPA, Region 6