



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 4  
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER  
61 FORSYTH STREET  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

AUG 07 2013

CERTIFIED MAIL  
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Carl E. Chamblee, Jr.  
Attorney at Law  
5582 Apple Park Drive  
Birmingham, Alabama 35235

Re: Mr. Kenneth Branch  
Proposed Consent Agreement and Final Order  
Docket Number: TSCA-04-2013-2736(b)

Dear Mr. Chamblee:

Enclosed is a copy of the ratified Consent Agreement and Final Order (CAFO) in the above-referenced matter. The original CAFO has been filed with the Regional Hearing Clerk and served on the parties as directed in Section 22.6 of the Consolidated Rules of Practice, 40 C.F.R. Part 22. Please inform your client that payment is required in accordance with Section V of the CAFO and the penalty information along with payment instructions are listed there.

Also enclosed is a copy of a document entitled "Notice of Securities and Exchange Commission Registrants' Duty to Disclose Environmental Legal Proceedings." This document puts your client on notice of its potential duty to disclose to the Securities and Exchange Commission any environmental enforcement actions taken by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 4. Where used in the document "SEC" refers to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Should you or your client have any questions about this matter or the company's compliance status in the future, please contact Mr. Alex Winston of the EPA Region 4 staff at (404) 562-8994 or by email at [winston.alex@epa.gov](mailto:winston.alex@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony G. Toney for". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A".

Anthony G. Toney  
Chief  
Pesticides and Toxic  
Substances Branch

Enclosures

cc: Kenneth Branch

UNITED STATES  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 4  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

In the Matter of:

Mr. Kenneth Branch

Respondent.

Docket No.: TSCA-04-2013-2736(b)

RECEIVED  
EPA REGION IV  
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HEARINGS CLERK

**CONSENT AGREEMENT AND FINAL ORDER**

**I. Nature of the Action**

1. This is a civil penalty proceeding pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), 15 U.S.C. § 2615(a), and pursuant to the Consolidated Rules of Practice Governing Administrative Assessment of Civil Penalties and the Revocation/Termination or Suspension of Permits (Consolidated Rules), 40 C.F.R. Part 22. The authority to take action under Section 16(a) of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2615(a) is vested in the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The Administrator of the EPA has delegated this authority under TSCA to the Regional Administrator of the EPA Region 4 by the EPA Delegation 12-2-A, dated May 11, 1994. The Regional Administrator of the EPA Region 4 has re-delegated this authority under TSCA to the Director of the Air, Pesticides, and Toxics Management Division, by the EPA Region 4 Delegation 12-2-A, dated January 14, 2009. In accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 22.3(a), the Complainant in this matter is the Director of the Air, Pesticides, and Toxics Management Division. Respondent is Mr. Kenneth Branch, doing business in the State of Alabama.

2. Complainant and Respondent have conferred for the purpose of settlement pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 22.18 and desire to resolve this matter and settle the allegations described herein without a formal hearing. Therefore, without the taking of any evidence or testimony, the making of any argument, or the adjudication of any issue in this matter, and in accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 22.13(b), this Consent Agreement and Final Order, (CAFO), will simultaneously commence and conclude this matter.

## **II. Preliminary Statements**

3. The Administrator of the EPA promulgated regulations at 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart F under the authority of Section 1018 of the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992, 42 U.S.C. § 4852d, also known as Title X of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992. Pursuant to Title X, it is a prohibited act under Section 409 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2689, for any person to fail or refuse to comply with a provision of Title X or any rule or order issued under Title X.
4. Pursuant to Section 16 of TSCA, 15 U.S.C. § 2615, the penalty for each violation of Title X of TSCA shall not exceed \$10,000. The Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 requires the EPA to review and adjust penalties, as necessary, for inflation at least once every four years. As such, pursuant to the Adjustment of Civil Monetary Penalties for Inflation Rule, 40 C.F.R. Part 19, the revised maximum penalty for each violation of Title X occurring after January 30, 1997, through January 12, 2009, is \$11,000 and for each violation occurring after January 12, 2009, the maximum penalty is \$16,000.
5. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 22.5(c)(4) the following individual is authorized to receive service for the EPA in this proceeding:

Alex Winston  
Lead and Children's Health Section  
U.S. EPA Region 4  
61 Forsyth Street  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960  
(404) 562-4817.

### **III. Specific Allegations**

6. Respondent is a Lessor, as defined at 40 C.F.R. § 745.103, of residential housing located in Birmingham and Tarrant, Alabama. These residential units are "target housing," as defined at 40 C.F.R. § 745.103.
7. Based on information obtained by the EPA on or about May 14, 2012, relating to Respondent's contracts to lease its target housing described above, the EPA alleges that Respondent violated Section 409 of TSCA and 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart F as follows:
  - a. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.107(a)(1), a Lessor shall provide the Lessee(s) an EPA-approved lead hazard information pamphlet before the Lessee(s) is obligated under any contract to lease target housing. Respondent failed to provide Lessee(s) an EPA-approved lead hazard information pamphlet in at least one lease.
  - b. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.107(a)(2), a Lessor shall disclose to the Lessee(s) the presence of any known lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards in the target housing. Respondent failed to disclose to the Lessee(s) the presence of any known lead-based paint in at least one lease.
  - c. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.107(a)(3), a Lessor shall disclose to each Agent the presence of any known lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards in the target housing, and the existence of any available records or reports pertaining to lead-based paint. Respondent failed to disclose to the Agent the presence of any known lead-based paint and the existence of any records or reports in at least one lease.

- d. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.107(a)(4), a Lessor shall provide to the Lessee(s) any records or reports available to the Lessor pertaining to lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards in the target housing. Respondent failed to provide to the Lessee(s) any records or reports in at least one lease.
- e. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.113(b)(1), each contract to lease target housing shall include, as an attachment to or within the contract, the Lead Warning Statement. Respondent failed to include an appropriate statement in at least one lease.
- f. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.113(b)(2), each contract to lease target housing shall include, as an attachment to or within the contract, a statement disclosing the presence of known lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards in the target housing being leased, or a statement indicating no knowledge of the presence of lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards. Respondent failed to include an appropriate statement in at least one lease.
- g. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.113(b)(3), each contract to lease target housing shall include, as an attachment to or within the contract, a list of any records or reports available to the Lessor that pertain to lead hazard information, or an indication that no such list exists. Respondent failed to include the appropriate information in at least one lease.
- h. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.113(b)(4), each contract to lease target housing shall include in the contract for lease a statement by the Lessee(s) affirming receipt of the information. Respondent failed to include the appropriate information in at least one lease.

- i. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.113(b)(5), each contract to lease target housing shall include, as an attachment to or within the contract, a statement by the one or more Agents involved in the transaction to lease target housing that the Agent(s) has informed the Lessor of the Lessor's obligations and that the Agent(s) is aware of his duty to ensure compliance. Respondent failed to include the appropriate information in at least one lease.
- j. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.113(b)(6), each contract to lease target housing shall include in the contract for lease signatures of the Lessor, Agent, and Lessee(s) certifying to the accuracy of their statements, as well as dates. Respondent failed to include the appropriate information in at least one lease.
- k. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 745.113(c)(1), a Lessor shall retain a copy of the completed disclosure records for no less than three years from the completion date of the lease. Respondent failed to retain a copy of the completed disclosure records.

#### **IV. Consent Agreement**

8. For the purposes of this CAFO, Respondent admits the jurisdictional allegations set forth above and neither admits nor denies the factual allegations set forth above.
9. Respondent waives its right to a hearing on the allegations contained herein and its right to appeal the proposed Final Order accompanying the Consent Agreement.
10. Respondent consents to the assessment of the penalty proposed by the EPA and agrees to pay the civil penalty as set forth in this CAFO.
11. Respondent certifies that as of the date of its execution of this CAFO, it is in compliance with all relevant requirements of 40 C.F.R. Part 745, Subpart F.

12. Compliance with this CAFO shall resolve the allegations of the violations contained herein. This CAFO shall not otherwise affect any liability of Respondent to the United States. Other than as expressed herein, neither the EPA nor Complainant waives any right to bring an enforcement action against Respondent for violation of any federal or state statute, regulation or permit, to initiate an action for imminent and substantial endangerment, or to pursue criminal enforcement.
13. Complainant and Respondent agree to settle this matter by their execution of this CAFO. The parties agree that the settlement of this matter is in the public interest and that this CAFO is consistent with the applicable requirements of TSCA.

#### **V. Final Order**

14. Respondent is assessed a civil penalty of **TWELVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$12,000)** which shall be paid within **thirty (30) days** after the effective date of this CAFO.
15. Respondent shall remit the penalty payment by either a cashier's or certified check made payable to the "Treasurer, United States of America."

**The Respondent shall note on the face of the check the Respondent's Name and the Docket Number TSCA-04-2013-2736(b) associated with this CAFO.**

The penalty payment shall be sent by one of the methods below.

Address for payment submittal using the United States Postal Service (USPS)  
(excluding USPS overnight mail):

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



Address for payment submittal using USPS overnight mail or other delivery service (e.g., Federal Express, United Parcel Service, DHL, etc.):

U.S. Bank  
Government Lockbox 979077  
U.S. EPA Fines & Penalties  
1005 Convention Plaza  
Mail Station SL-MO-C2-GL  
St. Louis, Missouri 63101

Contact Phone Number: (314) 418-1028

16. At the time of payment, Respondent shall send a separate copy of the check and a written statement that the payment is being made in accordance with this CAFO, to the following persons at the following addresses:

Regional Hearing Clerk  
U.S. EPA Region 4  
61 Forsyth Street  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960;

Alex Winston  
Lead and Children's Health Section  
U.S. EPA Region 4  
61 Forsyth Street  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960; and

Saundi J. Wilson  
Office of Environmental Accountability  
U.S. EPA Region 4  
61 Forsyth Street  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960.

17. For the purposes of state and federal income taxation, Respondent shall not be entitled, and agrees not to attempt, to claim a deduction for any civil penalty payment pursuant to this CAFO. Any attempt by Respondent to deduct any such payments shall constitute a violation of this CAFO.
18. Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 3717, the EPA is entitled to assess interest and penalties on debts owed to the United States and a charge to cover the cost of processing and handling a

delinquent claim. Interest will therefore begin to accrue on the civil penalty from the date of entry of this CAFO, if the penalty is not paid by the date required. A charge will also be assessed to cover the administrative costs, both direct and indirect, of overdue debts.

19. Complainant and Respondent shall bear their own costs and attorney fees in this matter.
20. This CAFO shall be binding upon the Respondent, its successors and assigns.
21. Each undersigned representative of the parties to this CAFO certifies that he or she is fully authorized by the party represented to enter into this CAFO and legally binds that party to this CAFO.

**The remainder of this page intentionally left blank.**

**VI. Effective Date**

22. The effective date of this CAFO shall be the date on which the CAFO is filed with the Regional Hearing Clerk.

**AGREED AND CONSENTED TO:**

**Respondent:** Kenneth Branch  
**Docket No.:** TSCA-04-2013-2736(b)

By: Kenneth Branch Date: 6-14-13  
Name: Kenneth Branch  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Complainant:** U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

By: Carol G. Remington Date: 7/29/13  
Beverly H. Banister, Director  
Air, Pesticides and Toxics  
Management Division

**APPROVED AND SO ORDERED** this 5 day of August, 2013.

By: Susan B. Schub  
Susan B. Schub  
Regional Judicial Officer

Consent Agreement and Final Order and served a true and correct copy of the foregoing Consent Agreement and Final Order, In the Matter of Kenneth Branch, Docket Number: TSCA-04-2013-2736(b), to the addressees listed below:

Kenneth Branch  
3609 Vanderbilt Road  
Birmingham, Alabama 35217

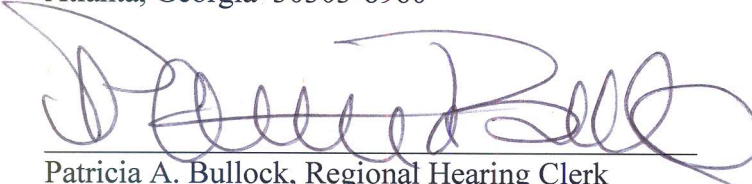
(via Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested)

Alex Winston  
Lead and Children's Health Section  
U.S. EPA Region 4  
61 Forsyth Street  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960

(via EPA's internal mail)

Robert Caplan, Senior Attorney  
Office of Environmental Accountability  
U.S. EPA Region 4  
61 Forsyth Street  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960

(via EPA's internal mail)



Patricia A. Bullock, Regional Hearing Clerk  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4  
61 Forsyth Street  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960  
(404) 562-9511

Date:

8-7-13