

AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 30, 2013

AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 20, 2013

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 2, 2013

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 19, 2013

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 8, 2013

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 9, 2013

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 227

Introduced by Assembly Member Gatto
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Alejo, Hagman, Logue, and
Muratsuchi)
(Coauthor: Senator Anderson)

February 4, 2013

An act to amend Section 25249.7 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to toxic substances, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 227, as amended, Gatto. Proposition 65: enforcement.

(1) The existing Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65) prohibits any person, in the course of doing business, from knowingly and intentionally exposing any individual to a chemical known to the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity without giving a specified warning, or from knowingly discharging or releasing such a chemical into water or any source of drinking water, except as specified. The act imposes civil penalties of not more than

\$2,500 per day upon persons who violate those prohibitions, and provides for the enforcement of those prohibitions by the Attorney General, a district attorney, or specified city attorneys or prosecutors, and by any person in the public interest. The act requires any person bringing an action in the public interest, or any private person filing an action in which a violation of the act is alleged, to notify the Attorney General, the district attorney, city attorney, or prosecutor in whose jurisdiction the violation is alleged to have occurred, and the alleged violator that such an action has been filed.

This bill would require a person filing an enforcement action in the public interest for certain specified exposures to provide a notice in a specified proof of compliance form. The bill would prohibit an enforcement action from being filed by that person, and would prohibit the recovery of certain payments or reimbursements, if the notice to the alleged violator alleges a failure to provide a clear and reasonable warning for those specified exposures and, within 14 days after receiving the notice, the alleged violator corrects the alleged violation, pays a civil penalty in the amount of \$500 per facility or premises, and notifies the person bringing the action that the violation has been corrected pursuant to the specified proof of compliance form. The bill would specify that the alleged violator may correct the violation, pay the civil penalty, and serve a correction notice on the person who served notice of the violation only one time for a violation arising from the same exposure in the same facility or on the same premises. The bill would require the Judicial Council, on ~~January~~ *April* 1, 2019, and at each 5-year interval thereafter, to adjust that civil penalty, as specified.

(2) Proposition 65 provides that it may be amended by a statute, passed in each house by $\frac{2}{3}$ vote, to further its purposes.

This bill would find and declare that it furthers the purposes of Proposition 65 and would make other findings regarding the purposes of the bill. The bill would declare that a specified provision of the bill is independent and severable from the other changes made by this bill.

(3) This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote: $\frac{2}{3}$. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 25249.7 of the Health and Safety Code
2 is amended to read:

3 25249.7. (a) A person who violates or threatens to violate
4 Section 25249.5 or 25249.6 may be enjoined in any court of
5 competent jurisdiction.

6 (b) (1) A person who has violated Section 25249.5 or 25249.6
7 is liable for a civil penalty not to exceed two thousand five hundred
8 dollars (\$2,500) per day for each violation in addition to any other
9 penalty established by law. That civil penalty may be assessed and
10 recovered in a civil action brought in any court of competent
11 jurisdiction.

12 (2) In assessing the amount of a civil penalty for a violation of
13 this chapter, the court shall consider all of the following:

14 (A) The nature and extent of the violation.

15 (B) The number of, and severity of, the violations.

16 (C) The economic effect of the penalty on the violator.

17 (D) Whether the violator took good faith measures to comply
18 with this chapter and the time these measures were taken.

19 (E) The willfulness of the violator's misconduct.

20 (F) The deterrent effect that the imposition of the penalty would
21 have on both the violator and the regulated community as a whole.

22 (G) Any other factor that justice may require.

23 (c) Actions pursuant to this section may be brought by the
24 Attorney General in the name of the people of the State of
25 California, by a district attorney, by a city attorney of a city having
26 a population in excess of 750,000, or, with the consent of the
27 district attorney, by a city prosecutor in a city or city and county
28 having a full-time city prosecutor, or as provided in subdivision
29 (d).

30 (d) Actions pursuant to this section may be brought by a person
31 in the public interest if both of the following requirements are met:

32 (1) The private action is commenced more than 60 days from
33 the date that the person has given notice of an alleged violation of
34 Section 25249.5 or 25249.6 that is the subject of the private action
35 to the Attorney General and the district attorney, city attorney, or
36 prosecutor in whose jurisdiction the violation is alleged to have
37 occurred, and to the alleged violator. If the notice alleges a
38 violation of Section 25249.6, the notice of the alleged violation

1 shall include a certificate of merit executed by the attorney for the
2 noticing party, or by the noticing party, if the noticing party is not
3 represented by an attorney. The certificate of merit shall state that
4 the person executing the certificate has consulted with one or more
5 persons with relevant and appropriate experience or expertise who
6 has reviewed facts, studies, or other data regarding the exposure
7 to the listed chemical that is the subject of the action, and that,
8 based on that information, the person executing the certificate
9 believes there is a reasonable and meritorious case for the private
10 action. Factual information sufficient to establish the basis of the
11 certificate of merit, including the information identified in
12 paragraph (2) of subdivision (h), shall be attached to the certificate
13 of merit that is served on the Attorney General.

14 (2) Neither the Attorney General, a district attorney, a city
15 attorney, nor a prosecutor has commenced and is diligently
16 prosecuting an action against the violation.

17 (e) A person bringing an action in the public interest pursuant
18 to subdivision (d) and a person filing an action in which a violation
19 of this chapter is alleged shall notify the Attorney General that the
20 action has been filed. Neither this subdivision nor the procedures
21 provided in subdivisions (f) to (k), inclusive, affect the
22 requirements imposed by statute or a court decision in existence
23 on January 1, 2002, concerning whether a person filing an action
24 in which a violation of this chapter is alleged is required to comply
25 with the requirements of subdivision (d).

26 (f) (1) A person filing an action in the public interest pursuant
27 to subdivision (d), a private person filing an action in which a
28 violation of this chapter is alleged, or a private person settling a
29 violation of this chapter alleged in a notice given pursuant to
30 paragraph (1) of subdivision (d), shall, after the action or violation
31 is subject either to a settlement or to a judgment, submit to the
32 Attorney General a reporting form that includes the results of that
33 settlement or judgment and the final disposition of the case, even
34 if dismissed. At the time of the filing of a judgment pursuant to
35 an action brought in the public interest pursuant to subdivision (d),
36 or an action brought by a private person in which a violation of
37 this chapter is alleged, the plaintiff shall file an affidavit verifying
38 that the report required by this subdivision has been accurately
39 completed and submitted to the Attorney General.

1 (2) A person bringing an action in the public interest pursuant
2 to subdivision (d), or a private person bringing an action in which
3 a violation of this chapter is alleged, shall, after the action is either
4 subject to a settlement, with or without court approval, or to a
5 judgment, submit to the Attorney General a report that includes
6 information on any corrective action being taken as a part of the
7 settlement or resolution of the action.

8 (3) The Attorney General shall develop a reporting form that
9 specifies the information that shall be reported, including, but not
10 limited to, for purposes of subdivision (e), the date the action was
11 filed, the nature of the relief sought, and for purposes of this
12 subdivision, the amount of the settlement or civil penalty assessed,
13 other financial terms of the settlement, and any other information
14 the Attorney General deems appropriate.

15 (4) If there is a settlement of an action brought by a person in
16 the public interest under subdivision (d), the plaintiff shall submit
17 the settlement, other than a voluntary dismissal in which no
18 consideration is received from the defendant, to the court for
19 approval upon noticed motion, and the court may approve the
20 settlement only if the court makes all of the following findings:

21 (A) The warning that is required by the settlement complies
22 with this chapter.

23 (B) The award of attorney's fees is reasonable under California
24 law.

25 (C) The penalty amount is reasonable based on the criteria set
26 forth in paragraph (2) of subdivision (b).

27 (5) The plaintiff subject to paragraph (4) has the burden of
28 producing evidence sufficient to sustain each required finding.
29 The plaintiff shall serve the motion and all supporting papers on
30 the Attorney General, who may appear and participate in a
31 proceeding without intervening in the case.

32 (6) Neither this subdivision nor the procedures provided in
33 subdivision (e) and subdivisions (g) to (k), inclusive, affect the
34 requirements imposed by statute or a court decision in existence
35 on January 1, 2002, concerning whether claims raised by a person
36 or public prosecutor not a party to the action are precluded by a
37 settlement approved by the court.

38 (g) The Attorney General shall maintain a record of the
39 information submitted pursuant to subdivisions (e) and (f) and
40 shall make this information available to the public.

1 (h) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the basis for the
2 certificate of merit required by subdivision (d) is not discoverable.
3 However, nothing in this subdivision precludes the discovery of
4 information related to the certificate of merit if that information
5 is relevant to the subject matter of the action and is otherwise
6 discoverable, solely on the ground that it was used in support of
7 the certificate of merit.

8 (2) Upon the conclusion of an action brought pursuant to
9 subdivision (d) with respect to a defendant, if the trial court
10 determines that there was no actual or threatened exposure to a
11 listed chemical, the court may, upon the motion of that alleged
12 violator or upon the court's own motion, review the basis for the
13 belief of the person executing the certificate of merit, expressed
14 in the certificate of merit, that an exposure to a listed chemical had
15 occurred or was threatened. The information in the certificate of
16 merit, including the identity of the persons consulted with and
17 relied on by the certifier, and the facts, studies, or other data
18 reviewed by those persons, shall be disclosed to the court in an
19 in-camera proceeding at which the moving party shall not be
20 present. If the court finds that there was no credible factual basis
21 for the certifier's belief that an exposure to a listed chemical had
22 occurred or was threatened, then the action shall be deemed
23 frivolous within the meaning of Section 128.7 of the Code of Civil
24 Procedure. The court shall not find a factual basis credible on the
25 basis of a legal theory of liability that is frivolous within the
26 meaning of Section 128.7 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

27 (i) The Attorney General may provide the factual information
28 submitted to establish the basis of the certificate of merit on request
29 to a district attorney, city attorney, or prosecutor within whose
30 jurisdiction the violation is alleged to have occurred, or to any
31 other state or federal government agency, but in all other respects
32 the Attorney General shall maintain, and ensure that all recipients
33 maintain, the submitted information as confidential official
34 information to the full extent authorized in Section 1040 of the
35 Evidence Code.

36 (j) In an action brought by the Attorney General, a district
37 attorney, a city attorney, or a prosecutor pursuant to this chapter,
38 the Attorney General, district attorney, city attorney, or prosecutor
39 may seek and recover costs and attorney's fees on behalf of a party

1 who provides a notice pursuant to subdivision (d) and who renders
2 assistance in that action.

3 (k) Any person who serves a notice of alleged violation pursuant
4 to paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) for an exposure identified in
5 subparagraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) of paragraph (1) shall complete,
6 as appropriate, and provide to the alleged violator, a notice of
7 special compliance procedure and proof of compliance form
8 pursuant to subdivision (l) and shall not file an action for that
9 exposure against the alleged violator, or recover from the alleged
10 violator in a settlement any payment in lieu of penalties or any
11 reimbursement for costs and attorney's fees, if all of the following
12 conditions have been met:

13 (1) The notice given pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision
14 (d) was served on or after the effective date of the act amending
15 this section during the 2013–14 Regular Session and alleges that
16 the alleged violator failed to provide clear and reasonable warning
17 as required under Section 25249.6 regarding one or more of the
18 following, and no other violation:

19 (A) An exposure to alcoholic beverages that are consumed on
20 the alleged violator's premises to the extent onsite consumption
21 is permitted by law.

22 (B) An exposure to a chemical known to the state to cause cancer
23 or reproductive toxicity in a food or beverage prepared and sold
24 on the alleged violator's premises primarily intended for immediate
25 consumption on or off premises, to the extent of both of the
26 following:

27 (i) The chemical was not intentionally added.

28 (ii) The chemical was formed by cooking or similar preparation
29 of food or beverage components necessary to render the food or
30 beverage palatable or to avoid microbiological contamination.

31 (C) An exposure to environmental tobacco smoke caused by
32 entry of persons (other than employees) on premises owned or
33 operated by the alleged violator where smoking is permitted at any
34 location on the premises.

35 (D) An exposure to chemicals known to the state to cause cancer
36 or reproductive toxicity in engine exhaust, to the extent the
37 exposure occurs inside a facility owned or operated by the alleged
38 violator and primarily intended for parking noncommercial
39 vehicles.

- 1 (2) Within 14 days after service of the notice, the alleged violator
2 has done all of the following:
- 3 (A) Corrected the alleged violation.
- 4 (B) (i) Agreed to pay a civil penalty for the alleged violation
5 of Section 25496.6 in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500),
6 to be adjusted quinquennially pursuant to clause (ii), per facility
7 or premises where the alleged violation occurred, of which 75
8 percent shall be deposited in the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic
9 Enforcement Fund, and 25 percent shall be paid to the person that
10 served the notice as provided in Section 25249.12.
- 11 (ii) On ~~January~~ *April* 1, 2019, and at each five-year interval
12 thereafter, the dollar amount of the civil penalty provided pursuant
13 to this subparagraph shall be adjusted by the Judicial Council based
14 on the change in the annual California Consumer Price Index for
15 All Urban Consumers, published by the Department of Industrial
16 Relations, Division of Labor Statistics, for the most recent five-year
17 period ending on December 31 of the year preceding the year in
18 which the adjustment is made, rounded to the nearest five dollars
19 (\$5). The Judicial Council shall quinquennially publish the dollar
20 amount of the adjusted civil penalty provided pursuant to this
21 subparagraph, together with the date of the next scheduled
22 adjustment.
- 23 (C) Notified, in writing, the person that served the notice of the
24 alleged violation, that the violation has been corrected. The written
25 notice shall include the notice of special compliance procedure
26 and proof of compliance form specified in subdivision (l), which
27 was provided by the person serving notice of the alleged violation
28 and which shall be completed by the alleged violator as directed
29 in the notice.
- 30 (3) The alleged violator shall deliver the civil penalty to the
31 person that served the notice of the alleged violation within 30
32 days of service of that notice, and the person that served the notice
33 of violation shall remit the portion of the penalty due to the Safe
34 Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Fund within 30 days of
35 receipt of the funds from the alleged violator.
- 36 (l) The notice required to be provided to an alleged violator
37 pursuant to subdivision (k) shall be presented as follows:

Date:
Name of Noticing Party or attorney for Noticing Party:
Address:
Phone number:

Page 1

SPECIAL COMPLIANCE PROCEDURE
PROOF OF COMPLIANCE

You are receiving this form because the Noticing Party listed above has alleged that you are violating California Health and Safety Code §25249.6 (Prop. 65).

The Noticing Party may not bring any legal proceedings against you for the alleged violation checked below if:

- (1) You have actually taken the corrective steps that you have certified in this form***
- (2) The Noticing Party has received this form at the address shown above, accurately completed by you, postmarked within 14 days of your receiving this notice***
- (3) The Noticing Party receives the required \$500 penalty payment from you at the address shown above postmarked within 30 days of your receiving this notice.***
- (4) This is the first time you have submitted a Proof of Compliance for a violation arising from the same exposure in the same facility on the same premises***

PART 1: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE NOTICING PARTY OR ATTORNEY FOR THE NOTICING PARTY

The alleged violation is for an exposure to: (check one)

Alcoholic beverages that are consumed on the alleged violator’s premises to the extent on-site consumption is permitted by law.

A chemical known to the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity in a food or beverage prepared and sold on the alleged violator’s premises for immediate consumption on or off premises to the extent: (1) the chemical was not intentionally added; and (2) the chemical was formed by cooking or similar preparation of food or beverage components necessary to render the food or beverage palatable or to avoid microbiological contamination.

Environmental tobacco smoke caused by entry of persons (other than employees) on premises owned or operated by the alleged violator where smoking is permitted at any location on the premises.

Chemicals known to the State to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity in engine exhaust, to the extent the exposure occurs inside a facility owned or operated by the alleged violator and primarily intended for parking noncommercial vehicles.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- (1) You have no potential liability under California Health and Safety Code §25249.6 if your business has nine (9) or fewer employees.**
- (2) Using this form will NOT prevent the Attorney General, a district attorney, a city attorney, or a prosecutor in whose jurisdiction the violation is alleged to have occurred from filing an action over the same alleged violations, and that in any in such action, the amount of civil penalty shall be reduced to reflect any payment made at this time.**

Date:
Name of Noticing Party or attorney for Noticing Party:
Address:
Phone number:

PART 2: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE ALLEGED VIOLATOR OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Certification of Compliance

Accurate completion of this form will demonstrate that you are now in compliance with California Health and Safety Code Section 25249.6 or the alleged violation listed above. You must complete and submit the form below to the Noticing Party at the address shown above, *postmarked within 14 days of your receiving this notice.*

I hereby agree to pay, within 30 days of completion of this notice, a civil penalty of \$500 to the noticing attorney, and certify that I have complied with Health and Safety Code §25249.6 by (check only one of the following):

- Posting a warning or warnings about the alleged exposure that complies with the law, and attaching a copy of that warning, and a photograph accurately showing its placement on my premises;
- Posting the warning or warnings demanded in writing by the Noticing Party, and attaching a copy of that warning and a photograph accurately showing its placement on my premises; OR
- eliminating the alleged exposure, and attaching a statement accurately describing how the alleged exposure has been eliminated.

Certification

My statements on this form, and on any attachments to it are true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and are made in good faith. I have carefully read the instructions to complete this form. I understand that if I make a false statement on this form, I may be subject to additional penalties under the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act Of 1986 (Proposition 65).

Signature of alleged violator or authorized representative

Date

Name and title of signatory

1 (m) An alleged violator may satisfy the conditions set forth in
2 subdivision (k) only one time for a violation arising from the same
3 exposure in the same facility or on the same premises.

4 (n) Nothing in subdivision (k) shall prevent the Attorney
5 General, a district attorney, a city attorney, or a prosecutor in whose
6 jurisdiction the violation is alleged to have occurred from filing
7 an action pursuant to subdivision (c) against an alleged violator.
8 In any such action, the amount of any civil penalty for a violation
9 shall be reduced to reflect any payment made by the alleged
10 violator for the same alleged violation pursuant to subparagraph
11 (B) of paragraph (2) of subdivision (k).

12 SEC. 2. The Legislature finds and declares that this act furthers
13 the purposes of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement
14 Act of 1986 (Chapter 6.6 (commencing with Section 25249.5) of
15 Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code).

16 SEC. 3. Specifically, the Legislature finds and declares that
17 subdivision (k) of Section 25249.7 of the Health and Safety Code
18 is necessary to further the purposes of Section 25249.6 of the
19 Health and Safety Code, in terms of speed of compliance and
20 reasonableness as contemplated by that section. To ensure prompt
21 compliance with the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement
22 Act of 1986 (Chapter 6.6 (commencing with Section 25249.5) of
23 Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code), paragraph (2) of
24 subdivision (k) of Section 25249.7 of the Health and Safety Code
25 shall be independent and severable from the rest of this act.

26 SEC. 4. The Legislature further finds and declares that
27 subdivisions (k) to (m), inclusive, of Section 25249.7 of the Health
28 and Safety Code are necessary to further the purposes of the intent
29 of fairness contemplated by the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic
30 Enforcement Act of 1986 (Chapter 6.6 (commencing with Section
31 25249.5) of Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code), as evinced
32 by the fairness factors outlined in Section 25249.10 of the Health
33 and Safety Code.

34 SEC. 5. The Legislature further finds and declares that Sections
35 2, 3, and 4 of this act are intended to articulate how this act furthers
36 the purposes of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement
37 Act of 1986 (Chapter 6.6 (commencing with Section 25249.5) of
38 Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code) and shall not be
39 construed to affect any litigation other than litigation concerning
40 whether this act furthers the purposes of the Safe Drinking Water

1 and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Chapter 6.6 (commencing
2 with Section 25249.5) of Division 20 of the Health and Safety
3 Code).

4 SEC. 6. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the
5 immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within
6 the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into
7 immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

8 In order to avoid unnecessary litigation and to facilitate
9 compliance with the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement
10 Act of 1986, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.