



Office of the District Attorney, Alameda County

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PRESS RELEASE



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## Alameda County District Attorney Announces Settlement of Hazardous Waste Case Against Firestone

*Company to pay nearly \$4 million*

**OAKLAND** – Firestone Complete Auto Care has agreed to a nearly \$4 million settlement with the Alameda County District Attorney's Office and 28 other prosecutors in an environmental protection case that alleged the company unlawfully disposed of hazardous waste.

This week, a judge ordered \$2.865 million in civil penalties to be paid by Bridgestone Retail Operations, LLC, the company that does business as Firestone Complete Auto Care at more than 150 locations in California. The civil complaint, filed in Santa Clara County Superior Court, alleged that the automotive repair company did not properly manage hazardous waste, such as solvents, automotive fluids, aerosols, batteries, and electronic devices. The settlement also resolves allegations that the company failed to redact or shred confidential customer information before throwing the paperwork in the trash.

"My office will continue to hold companies accountable for the harm they cause to Alameda County's precious natural resources by violating our state's important environmental laws. We are proud to work with our fellow prosecutors and environmental agencies statewide on this important enforcement action," said District Attorney Nancy O'Malley.

In addition to paying civil penalties, Firestone was ordered to pay \$350,000 for the cost of the investigation and \$725,000 in agreed-upon compliance and training expenditures. Firestone cooperated with prosecutors during the investigation and took steps to improve its compliance with the environmental and consumer protection violations brought to its attention.

The investigation began in 2016 when Alameda County and Santa Clara County District Attorney investigators conducted unannounced inspections of Firestone trash containers, revealing non-empty containers of hazardous waste and pages of customer records. Additional inspections in those counties and in San Diego, San Bernardino, and Orange counties took place over the next three years.

The Firestone judgment is the latest in a series of environmental civil enforcement actions successfully brought by California prosecutors against large automotive service providers and retailers. The prior judgments, which included civil penalties and injunctions, were against Service King (2019, \$2.3 million), Pep Boys (2019, \$3.7 million), AutoZone (2019, \$11 million), Cooks Collision (2018, \$1.5 million), AutoNation (2018, \$3.3 million), and O'Reilly Auto Parts (2016, \$9.8 million).

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