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NEWS RELEASE

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MODESTO, CALIFORNIA -

**DISTRICT ATTORNEYS REACH \$900,000.00 SETTLEMENT WITH
ONE OF CALIFORNIA'S LARGEST GREASE HAULING BUSINESSES**

Stanislaus County District Attorney James C. Brazelton announced today that a civil enforcement action charging a large Fresno-based grease hauling business with violations of water pollution laws was settled today in Stockton. The case was based on the work of a statewide taskforce created by the California Environmental Protection Agency to focus enforcement efforts on the illegal disposal of waste grease in California. The complaint was filed in January of 2003, in San Joaquin County, with the action joined by 12 other counties throughout California including Fresno, Kings, Madera, Merced, Monterey, Sacramento, San Bernardino, Shasta, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, and Tehama Counties.

The complaint alleged that Thrifty Best Service, a company operated by Central California Wastepaper Incorporated, violated provisions of the State Water Code and Fish and Game Code, created a public nuisance and engaged in unfair business practices including false advertising, by illegally dumping inedible kitchen grease into public sewers and storm drains. Ameriguard Maintenance Service, LLC, a successor company to Thrifty Best, was later added to the complaint after Thrifty Best Services ceased doing business in California.

While the defendants did not admit the allegations in the complaint, as part of the civil settlement, Thrifty Best did admit nine counts of contempt for violating restraining orders issued in the case. The \$900,000 settlement in the case represents \$620,400.00 in penalties and \$279,600 in costs. Prosecutors also obtained a court order preventing Thrifty Best Service and its owner, William Shubin, from doing business in California forever. Ameriguard Maintenance Services and its owner, Michael Bessonov are required by the court order to comply with all applicable laws and to provide the prosecutors with information verifying that fact.

The illegal disposal of restaurant grease is a significant statewide problem causing damage to publicly owned sewage treatment facilities, expensive sewer back-ups and damage to the environment including water pollution. Businesses contracting with Thrifty Best for waste grease services expected the company to properly dispose of the waste through sewage treatment plants, rendering plants or recycling facilities and were likely unaware of the alleged unlawful disposals. The complaint alleged that Thrifty Best Service

employees violated the law in at least seven incidents occurring in seven different locations ranging from Redding to Rancho Cucamonga.

The District Attorneys joining in today's filing include:

ELIZABETH EGAN, District Attorney of Fresno County
RONALD L. CALHOUN, District Attorney of Kings County
ERNEST J. LICALSI, District Attorney of Madera County
GORDON SPENCER, District Attorney of Merced County
DEAN FLIPPO, District Attorney of Monterey County
JAN SCULLY, District Attorney of Sacramento County
MICHAEL RAMOS, District Attorney of San Bernardino County
JOHN D. PHILLIPS, District Attorney of San Joaquin County
GERALD C. BENITO, District Attorney of Shasta County
DAVID W. PAULSON, District Attorney of Solano County
STEPHAN PASSALACQUA, District Attorney of Sonoma County
JAMES C. BRAZELTON, District Attorney of Stanislaus County
GREG COHEN, District Attorney of Tehama County

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