

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 4

FILED

Aug 01, 2024

3:20 pm

U.S. EPA REGION 4  
HEARING CLERK

In the Matter of:

**BeSafe Industries, LLC**

Respondent.

Docket No. **FIFRA-04-2024-3017(b)**

**CONSENT AGREEMENT**

**I. NATURE OF ACTION**

1. This is an administrative penalty assessment proceeding brought under Section 14(a) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA or the Act), as amended, 7 U.S.C. § 136l(a), and Sections 22.13(b) and 22.18 of the *Consolidated Rules of Practice Governing Administrative Assessment of Civil Penalties and the Revocation/Termination or Suspension of Permits* (Consolidated Rules), as codified at Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) Part 22.
2. This Consent Agreement and the attached Final Order shall collectively be referred to as the CAFO.
3. Having found that settlement is consistent with the provisions of FIFRA and applicable regulations, the Parties have agreed to settle this action pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 22.18 and consent to the entry of this CAFO without adjudication of any issues of law or fact herein.

**II. PARTIES**

4. Complainant is the Director of the Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 4, who has been delegated the authority on behalf of the EPA to enter into this CAFO pursuant to 40 C.F.R. Part 22 and Section 14(a) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136l(a).
5. Respondent is BeSafe Industries, LLC (BeSafe or Respondent), a limited liability company doing

business in the State of Florida with its principal place of business located at 2600 S Douglas Road, Suite PH7 Coral Gables, Florida 33134.

### III. GOVERNING LAW

6. The term "label" is defined in Section 2(p)(1) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136(p)(1), to mean the written, printed, or graphic matter on, or attached to, the pesticide or device or any of its containers or wrappers.
7. The term "labeling" is defined in Section 2(p)(2) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136(p)(2), to mean all labels and all other written, printed, or graphic matter (a) accompanying the pesticide or device at any time; or (b) to which reference is made on the label or in literature accompanying the pesticide or device.
8. The term "person" is defined in Section 2(s) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136(s), to mean any individual, partnership, association, corporation, or any organized group of persons whether incorporated or not.
9. The term "pest" is defined in Section 2(t) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136(t), to mean any insect, rodent, nematode, fungus, weed, or any other form of terrestrial or aquatic plant or animal life or virus, bacteria, or other micro-organism (except viruses, bacteria, or other micro-organisms on or in living man or other living animals) which the Administrator declares to be a pest under Section 25(c)(1) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136w(c)(1).
10. The term "pesticide" is defined in Section 2(u) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136(u), to mean any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest.
11. The term "to distribute or sell" is defined in Section 2(gg) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136(gg), to mean to distribute, sell, offer for sale, hold for distribution, hold for sale, hold for shipment, ship, deliver for shipment, release for shipment, or receive and (having so received) deliver or offer to deliver.
12. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 152.3, "distribute or sell" is further defined to mean the acts of distributing, selling, offering for sale, holding for sale, shipping, holding for shipment, delivering for shipment, or receiving and (having so received) delivering or offering to deliver, or releasing for shipment to any person in any State.
13. Pursuant to Section 3 of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136a, pesticides that are sold or distributed in the United States are required to be registered with the EPA.
14. Pursuant to Section 12(a)(1)(A) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136j(a)(1)(A), it is unlawful for any person to distribute or sell to any person any pesticide that is not registered under Section 3 of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136a.
15. Pursuant to Section 12(a)(2)(N) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136j(a)(2)(N), it is unlawful for any person who is a registrant, wholesaler, dealer, retailer, or other distributor to fail to file reports required by FIFRA.
16. Pursuant to 19 C.F.R. § 12.112, an importer (or its agent) desiring to import pesticides or devices

into the United States is required to submit to the EPA Administrator a Notice of Arrival of Pesticides and Devices (NOA) [EPA Form 3540-1] prior to the arrival of the shipment(s) into the United States, or, as an alternative to submitting a NOA, the importer or its agent may file an entry via the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) Data Processing System.

17. Section 14(a) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136l(a), in conjunction with 40 C.F.R. Part 19, Adjustments of Civil Monetary Penalties for Inflation, authorizes the assessment of a civil penalty for violations of the Act.

#### IV. FINDINGS OF FACTS

18. Respondent is a "person" as defined by Section 2(s) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136(s), and as such is subject to FIFRA and the regulations promulgated thereunder.
19. On or about March 8, 2021, an authorized representative of the EPA conducted an inspection of a retail store located in North Carolina. During the inspection, the inspector observed that the store was selling and distributing a product named "BeSafe Disinfecting Wipes," (herein: BeSafe Wipes) whose label included the following claims:
  - (a) "BeSafe Disinfecting Wipes;"
  - (b) "Kills 99.9% of Viruses & Bacteria;"
  - (c) "As a general purpose disinfectant for noncritical medical devices and surfaces;" and
  - (d) "Antibacterial Formula."
20. Based on further review of the labels and labeling, it was discovered that the owner and distributor of the BeSafe Wipes was BeSafe Industries, LLC of Coral Gables, Florida.
21. The labels for the BeSafe Wipes also displayed BeSafe's website, [www.besafeindustries.com](http://www.besafeindustries.com).
22. On or about April 30, 2021, the EPA reviewed BeSafe's website and observed the following claims being made for the BeSafe Wipes:
  - (a) "Disinfecting Wipes;" and
  - (b) "Effective at killing 99.9% of viruses and bacteria."
23. Based on the presence of the above listed claims on the product label and on the BeSafe website, the EPA determined that the product was a pesticide as defined in Section 2(u) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136(u), which includes any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest. The product would, therefore, be required to be registered with the EPA pursuant to FIFRA Section 3, to be distributed or sold in the United States.
24. At the time of the March 8, 2021, inspection, the BeSafe Wipes were not registered as a pesticide with the Administrator of EPA as required by Section 3 of FIFRA.

25. On or about August 24, 2021, BeSafe provided information to the EPA which showed that BeSafe imported the BeSafe Wipes into the United States on one or more occasions between September 2020 and April 2021. BeSafe worked with distributors to subsequently distribute or sell the BeSafe Wipes to various retail stores within the United States between November 2020 and April 2021.
26. To date, the EPA has received no information showing that BeSafe, or any agent authorized by BeSafe, submitted Notices of Arrival of Pesticides and Devices (NOA; EPA Form 3540-1), or filed an electronic equivalent with the filing of entry documentation, for the importation of the BeSafe Wipes as required by 19 C.F.R. § 12.112.

#### **V. ALLEGED VIOLATIONS**

27. The EPA alleges that Respondent violated Section 12(a)(1)(A) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136j(a)(1)(A), by selling and distributing unregistered pesticides as described in Section IV.
28. EPA alleges that Respondent violated Section 12(a)(2)(N) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136j(a)(2)(N), by importing pesticides without the submittal of a NOA or filing its electronic equivalent as described in Section IV.

#### **VI. STIPULATIONS**

29. The issuance of this CAFO simultaneously commences and concludes this proceeding.  
*See* 40 C.F.R. § 22.13(b).
30. For the purpose of this proceeding, as required by 40 C.F.R. § 22.18(b)(2), Respondent:
  - (a) admits that the EPA has jurisdiction over the subject matter alleged in this CAFO;
  - (b) neither admits nor denies the factual allegations set forth in Section IV (Findings of Facts) of this CAFO;
  - (c) consents to the assessment of a civil penalty as stated below;
  - (d) consents to the conditions specified in this CAFO;
  - (e) waives any right to contest the alleged violations of law set forth in Section V (Alleged Violations) of this CAFO; and
  - (f) waives its rights to appeal the Final Order accompanying this CAFO.
31. For the purpose of this proceeding, Respondent:
  - (a) agrees that this CAFO states a claim upon which relief may be granted against Respondent;
  - (b) acknowledges that this CAFO constitutes an enforcement action for purposes of considering Respondent's compliance history in any subsequent enforcement actions;
  - (c) waives any right it may possess at law or in equity to challenge the authority of EPA to

bring a civil action in a United States District Court to compel compliance with the CAFO, and to seek an additional penalty for such noncompliance, and agrees that federal law shall govern in any such civil action;

(d) by executing this CAFO, certifies to the best of its knowledge that Respondent is currently in compliance with all relevant requirements of FIFRA and its implementing regulation;

(e) waives any right it may have pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 22.8 to be present during any discussions with, or to be served with and reply to, any memorandum or communication addressed to EPA officials where the purpose of such discussion, memorandum, or communication is to persuade such official to accept or issue this CAFO; and

(f) agrees to comply with the terms of this CAFO.

32. In accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 22.5, the individuals named in the certificate of service are authorized to receive service related to this proceeding and the parties agree to receive service by electronic means.

#### VII. TERMS OF PAYMENT

33. Respondent consents to the payment of a civil penalty, which was calculated in accordance with the Act, in the amount of **NINETY THOUSAND AND EIGHT HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$90,800.00)**, which is to be paid within thirty (30) days of the Effective Date of this CAFO.

34. Payment(s) shall be made by cashier's check, certified check, by electronic funds transfer (EFT), or by Automated Clearing House (ACH) (also known as REX or remittance express). If paying by check, the check shall be payable to: Treasurer, United States of America, and the Facility name and Docket Number for this matter shall be referenced on the face of the check. If Respondent sends payment by standard U.S. Postal Service delivery, the payment shall be addressed to:

United States Environmental Protection Agency  
P.O. Box 979078  
St. Louis, Missouri 63197-9000

If Respondent sends payment by non-standard mail delivery (e.g., FedEx, DHL, UPS, USPS certified, registered, etc.), the payment shall be sent to:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Government Lockbox 979078  
3180 Rider Trail S.  
Earth City, Missouri 63045

If paying by EFT, Respondent shall transfer the payment to:

Federal Reserve Bank of New York  
ABA: 021030004  
Account Number: 68010727

SWIFT address: FRNYUS33  
33 Liberty Street  
New York, New York 10045  
Beneficiary: Environmental Protection Agency

If paying by ACH, Respondent shall remit payment to:

US Treasury REX / Cashlink ACH Receiver  
ABA: 051036706  
Account Number: 310006, Environmental Protection Agency  
CTX Format Transaction Code 22 – checking  
Physical location of US Treasury facility:  
5700 Rivertech Court  
Riverdale, Maryland 20737  
REX (Remittance Express): 1-866-234-5681

35. Respondent shall send proof of **payment**, within 24 hours of payment of the civil penalty, to:

Regional Hearing Clerk  
R4\_Regional\_Hearing\_Clerk@epa.gov

and

Seth Ramsay  
Chemical Safety and Land Enforcement Branch  
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division  
ramsay.seth@epa.gov

36. "Proof of payment" means, as applicable, a copy of the check, confirmation of credit card or debit card payment, confirmation of wire or automated clearinghouse transfer, and any other information required to demonstrate that payment has been made according to the EPA requirements, in the amount due, and identified with the Facility name and Docket No. **FIFRA-04-2024-3017(b)**.

37. Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 3717, 31 C.F.R. § 901.9, and 40 C.F.R. § 13.11, if Respondent fails to remit the civil penalty as agreed to herein, the EPA is entitled to assess interest and penalties on debts owed to the United States and a charge to cover the costs of processing and handling the delinquent claim. Accordingly, the EPA may require the Respondent to pay the following amounts on any amount overdue:

- (a) Interest. Interest will begin to accrue on the civil penalty from the Effective Date of this CAFO. If the civil penalty is paid within 30 days of the Effective Date of this CAFO, interest is waived. However, if the civil penalty is not paid in full within 30 days of the Effective Date of this CAFO, interest will continue to accrue on any unpaid portion until the unpaid portion of the penalty and accrued interest is paid. Interest will be assessed at the rate of the United States Treasury tax and loan rate, as established by the Secretary of the Treasury, in accordance with 31 U.S.C. § 3717(a)(1), 31 C.F.R. § 901.9(b), and 40 C.F.R. § 13.11(a).

- (b) Non-Payment Penalty. On any portion of a civil penalty more than ninety (90) days past due, Respondent must pay a non-payment penalty of not more than six percent (6%) per annum, which will accrue from the date the penalty payment became due and is not paid, as provided in 31 U.S.C. § 3717(e)(2) and 31 C.F.R. § 901.9(d). This non-payment penalty is in addition to charges which accrue or may accrue under subparagraphs (a) and (c) and will be assessed monthly. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 13.11(c).
  - (c) Monthly Handling Charge. Respondent must pay a late payment handling charge to cover the administrative costs of processing and handling the delinquent claim, based on either actual or average cost incurred. 31 C.F.R. § 901.9(c), and 40 C.F.R. § 13.11(b). Administrative costs will be assessed monthly throughout the period the debt is overdue except as provided by 40 C.F.R. § 13.12.
38. If Respondent fails to timely pay any portion of the penalty assessed under this CAFO, pursuant to Section 14 (a)(5) of FIFRA 7 U.S.C. § 136(a)(5), the EPA may:
- (a) refer the debt to a credit reporting agency or a collection agency pursuant to Section 14(a) of FIFRA 7 U.S.C. § 136(a), 40 C.F.R. §§ 13.13 and 13.14;
  - (b) collect the debt by administrative offset (i.e., the withholding of money payable by the United States to, or held by the United States for, a person to satisfy the debt the person owes the Government), which includes, but is not limited to, referral to the Internal Revenue Service for offset against income tax refunds, 40 C.F.R. Part 13, Subparts C and H;
  - (c) suspend or revoke Respondent's licenses or other privileges, or suspend or disqualify Respondent from doing business with the EPA or engaging in programs the EPA sponsors or funds, 40 C.F.R. § 13.17; and/or
  - (d) request that the Attorney General bring a civil action in the appropriate district court to recover the amount assessed pursuant to Section 14(a)(5) of FIFRA, 7 U.S.C. § 136(a)(5).
39. Pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 6050X and 26 C.F.R. § 1.6050X-1, the EPA is required to send a completed Form 1098-F ("Fines, Penalties, and Other Amounts") to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) annually with respect to any court order and settlement agreement (including administrative settlements), that requires a payor to pay an aggregate amount that the EPA reasonably believes will be equal to, or in excess of, \$50,000 for the payor's violation of any law or the investigation or inquiry into the payor's potential violation of any law, including amounts paid for "restitution or remediation of property" or to come "into compliance with a law." The EPA is further required to furnish a written statement, which provides the same information provided to the IRS, to each payor (for example, a copy of Form 1098-F). In order to provide the EPA with sufficient information to enable it to fulfill these obligations, the EPA herein requires, and Respondent herein agrees, that:
- (a) Respondent shall complete a Form W-9 ("Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification"), which is available at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>;

- (b) Respondent shall therein certify that its completed Form W-9 includes Respondent's correct Tax Identification Number (TIN) or that Respondent has applied and is waiting for issuance of a TIN;
- (c) Respondent shall email its completed Form W-9 to the EPA Region 4's Cincinnati Finance Center contact, Jessica Henderson (henderson.jessica@epa.gov), on or before the date that Respondent's initial penalty payment is due, pursuant to Paragraph 33 of this CAFO, and the EPA recommends encrypting Form W-9 email correspondence; and
- (d) In the event that Respondent has certified in its completed Form W-9 that it has applied for a TIN and that TIN has not been issued to Respondent by the date that its initial penalty payment is due, then Respondent, using the same email address identified in the preceding sub-paragraph, shall further:
  - i. notify EPA's Cincinnati Finance Center of this fact, via email, by the date that Respondent's initial penalty payment is due; and
  - ii. provide EPA's Cincinnati Finance Center with Respondent's TIN, via email, within five (5) days of Respondent's issuance and receipt of the TIN.
- (e) Failure to comply with providing Form W-9 or Respondent's TIN may subject Respondent to a penalty. See 26 U.S.C. § 6723, 26 U.S.C. § 6724(d)(3), and 26 C.F.R. § 301.6723-1.

40. Penalties paid pursuant to this CAFO shall not be deductible for purposes of federal taxes.

#### **VIII. EFFECT OF CAFO**

- 41. In accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 22.18(c), Respondent's full compliance with this CAFO shall only resolve Respondent's liability for federal civil penalties for the violations and facts specifically alleged above.
- 42. In accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 22.18(c), full payment of the civil penalty, as provided in Section VII (Terms of Payment), shall satisfy the requirements of this CAFO; but shall not in any case affect the right of the EPA or the United States to pursue appropriate injunctive or other equitable relief or criminal sanctions for any violations of law.
- 43. Any violation of this CAFO may result in a civil judicial action for civil penalties as provided in Section 14(a) of the Act, 7 U.S.C. § 136/(a), as well as criminal sanctions as provided in Section 14(b) of the Act, 7 U.S.C. § 136/(b). The EPA may use any information submitted under this CAFO in an administrative, civil judicial, or criminal action.
- 44. Nothing in this CAFO shall relieve Respondent of the duty to comply with all applicable provisions of FIFRA and other federal, state, or local laws or statutes, nor shall it restrict the EPA's authority to seek compliance with any applicable laws or regulations, nor shall it be construed to be a ruling on, or determination of, any issue related to any federal, state, or local permit, except as expressly provided herein.



45. Nothing herein shall be construed to limit the power of EPA to undertake any action against Respondent or any person in response to conditions that may present an imminent and substantial endangerment as provided under the Act.
46. The terms, conditions, and compliance requirements of this CAFO may not be modified or amended except upon the written agreement of both Parties, and approval of the Regional Judicial Officer.
47. The provisions of this CAFO shall apply to and be binding upon Respondent and its successors and assigns. Respondent shall direct its officers, directors, employees, agents, trustees, and authorized representatives to comply with the provisions of this CAFO.
48. Any change in ownership, partnership, corporate, or legal status relating to Respondent will not in any way alter Respondent's obligations and responsibilities under this CAFO.
49. By signing this Consent Agreement, Respondent acknowledges that this CAFO will be available to the public and agrees that this CAFO does not contain any confidential business information or personally identifiable information.
50. By signing this Consent Agreement, the Complainant and the undersigned representative of Respondent each certify that he or she is fully authorized to execute and enter into the terms and conditions of this CAFO and has the legal capacity to bind the party he or she represents to this CAFO.
51. By signing this Consent Agreement, both Parties agree that each party's obligations under this CAFO constitute sufficient consideration for the other party's obligations.
52. By signing this Consent Agreement, Respondent certifies that the information it has supplied concerning this matter was at the time of submission, and continues to be, true, accurate, and complete for each such submission, response, and statement. Respondent acknowledges that there are significant penalties for submitting false or misleading information, including the possibility of fines and imprisonment for knowing submission of such information, under 18 U.S.C. § 1001.
53. The EPA also reserves the right to revoke this CAFO and settlement penalty if and to the extent that the EPA finds, after signing this CAFO, that any information provided by Respondent was materially false or inaccurate at the time such information was provided to the EPA. If such false or inaccurate material was provided, The EPA reserves the right to assess and collect any and all civil penalties for any violation described herein. The EPA shall give Respondent notice of its intent to revoke, which shall not be effective until received by Respondent in writing.
54. It is the intent of the parties that the provisions of this CAFO are severable. If any provision or authority of this CAFO or the application of this CAFO to any party or circumstances is held by any judicial or administrative authority to be invalid or unenforceable, the application of such provisions to other parties or circumstances and the remainder of the CAFO shall remain in force and shall not be affected thereby.

55. Unless specifically stated otherwise in this CAFO, each party shall bear its own attorney's fees, costs, and disbursements incurred in this proceeding.

**IX. EFFECTIVE DATE**


56. This CAFO shall become effective upon execution of the Final Order by the Regional Judicial Officer on the date of filing with the Hearing Clerk.

**[Remainder of Page Intentionally Left Blank**

**Complainant and Respondent will Each Sign on Separate Pages]**

The foregoing Consent Agreement In the Matter of **BeSafe Industries, LLC**, Docket Number **FIFRA-04-2024-3017(b)** is Hereby Stipulated, Agreed and Approved for Entry.

FOR RESPONDENT:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Printed Name: JONATHAN LEYVA

Title: MANAGER

Address: 2600 S. DOUGLAS RD, PH 7  
COOK GRABES, FL 33134

The foregoing Consent Agreement In the Matter of **BeSafe Industries, LLC**, Docket Number **FIFRA-04-2024-3017(b)** is Hereby Stipulated, Agreed and Approved for Entry.

FOR COMPLAINANT:

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Keriema S. Newman  
Director  
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 4

In the Matter of:

**BeSafe Industries, LLC,**

Respondent.

Docket No. **FIFRA-04-2024-3017(b)**

FINAL ORDER

The Regional Judicial Officer is authorized to ratify this Consent Agreement which memorializes a settlement between Complainant and Respondent. 40 C.F.R. §§ 22.4(b) and 22.18(b)(3). The foregoing Consent Agreement is, therefore, hereby approved, ratified and incorporated by reference into this Final Order in accordance with 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 Respondent is hereby ORDERED to comply with all of the terms of the foregoing Consent Agreement effective immediately upon filing of this Consent Agreement and Final Order with the Regional Hearing Clerk. This Final Order disposes of this matter pursuant to 40 C.F.R. §§ 22.18 and 22.31.

**BEING AGREED, IT IS SO ORDERED.**

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Regional Judicial Officer

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I certify that the foregoing Consent Agreement and Final Order, in the Matter of **BeSafe Industries, LLC**, Docket No. **FIFRA-04-2024-3017(b)**, were filed and copies of the same were emailed to the parties as indicated below.

**Via email to all parties at the following email addresses:**

To Respondent: Jonathan Leyva  
Manager  
BeSafe Industries, LLC  
jonathan.leyva@besafeindustries.com  
(305) 392-2200

Stanley Abramson  
ArentFox Schiff LLP  
stanley.abramson@afslaw.com  
(202) 857-6000

To EPA: Seth Ramsay  
Case Development Officer  
ramsay.seth@epa.gov  
(404) 562-9053

Robert Caplan  
Senior Attorney  
caplan.robert@epa.gov  
(404) 562-9520

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Shannon L. Richardson, Regional Hearing Clerk  
R4\_Regional\_Hearing\_Clerk@epa.gov