



# COUNTY OF FRESNO

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## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **DISTRICT ATTORNEY ANNOUNCES SETTLEMENT OF A MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION CASE AGAINST AT&T**

The Fresno County District Attorney's Office announced today that they, along with the district attorneys of Santa Cruz, Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, and the City Attorney of Los Angeles, have obtained a civil judgment in an environmental protection lawsuit. The statewide coalition secured a \$5.9 million settlement from AT&T over its alleged failure to provide Hazardous Materials Business Plans (HMBP) as required by the State of California. These documents, designed to minimize health and safety impacts resulting from the accidental release of hazardous materials, are mandated for businesses – like AT&T – that use sizable amounts of hazardous materials. The \$5.9 million settlement is one of the largest ever awarded statewide for this type of environmental violation.

“Ensuring the safety of the public as well as the environment they live in by holding large companies accountable for their conduct is an important goal of this office,” said District Attorney Lisa Smittcamp.

According to the coalition's complaint, AT&T owns and operates telecommunications facilities throughout California which utilize backup power batteries. Batteries are classified as hazardous because they contain hazardous materials. Despite these risks, AT&T allegedly failed to establish, implement, or submit an HMBP for over 3,200 of their facilities, in violation of the Health and Safety Code and California Regulations. The HMBP's must be made available to firefighters, health officials, public safety officers and regulatory agents. The plans must also include an inventory of the hazardous materials, a site map, an emergency response strategy, and an employee training guide.

Cooperating with authorities, AT&T began self-reporting these violations to the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and began the process of coming into compliance with State law. AT&T is subject to a wide-reaching injunction. The injunction includes HMBP compliance requirements for each facility and audit procedures to ensure compliance.

The Fresno County District Attorney's Office will be receiving \$613,479.16, the Fresno County Community Health Department, Environmental Health Division will be awarded \$110,625.00, and \$250,000 will be given as part of the Supplemental Environmental Project to the CUPA Forum Environmental Protection Trust Fund.