

Raley's to pay \$1.6 mil. in waste disposal suit

By Mark Glover and Bill Lindelof, Sacramento Bee

Raley's has agreed to pay nearly \$1.6 million in civil penalties, costs and funding for environmental projects as part of a settlement related to allegations of improperly disposing hazardous waste.

The judgment is the culmination of a civil enforcement lawsuit filed in San Joaquin County to stop the West Sacramento-based supermarket chain from unlawfully transporting and disposing of retail hazardous waste, according to a press release from at least two of the 25 district attorneys who announced the suit.

The settlement was approved by San Joaquin Superior Court Judge Bob McNatt.

In addition to devoting resources to complying with California environmental law, Raley's has agreed to purchase five mobile freshwater purification systems to provide safe drinking water to local communities during emergencies. The mobile purification systems will be located in Placer, El Dorado, Sonoma, Sacramento and Contra Costa counties, but will be available to communities statewide during emergencies.

Rui Cunha, Placer County assistant director of emergency services, said the water purification trailers "could make a difference for areas hardest hit by temporary water shortages."

In a statement Monday, Raley's said: "Upon learning of this inquiry by the district attorneys, we began an immediate investigation and worked with the district attorneys' offices to find a resolution agreeable to both sides."

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