

1 ALAN R. BRAYTON, ESQ., S.B. #73685 DAVID R. DONADIO, ESQ., S.B. #154436 OREN P. NOAH, ESQ., S.B. #136310 2 BRAYTON PURCELL LLP ATTORNEYS AT LAW 222 Rush Landing Road 4 P.O. Box 6169 Novato, California 94948-6169 5 Tel: 415-898-1555 Fax: 415-898-1247 6 Attorneys for Plaintiffs 7 8 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA 9 **COUNTY OF ALAMEDA** 10 11 DAMON LEEPER and **ASBESTOS** SONDRA LEEPER, No. RG14711162 12 Plaintiffs, PLAINTIFFS' OPPOSITION TO **DEFENDANT UNION CARBIDE** 13 CORPORATION'S MOTION FOR VS. 14 PROTECTIVE ORDER TO ENFORCE CERTAINTEED CORPORATION, et al., STIPULATION, OR IN THE ALTERNATIVÉ, VACATE AND 15 Defendants. CONTINUE TRIAL DATE AND 16 REOUEST FOR MONETARY SANCTIONS 17 Date: August 15, 2014 18 Time: 9:31 a.m. Dept.: 30 19 Trial Date: October 14, 2014 20 Action Filed: January 23, 2014 21 I. 22 23 INTRODUCTION UNION CARBIDE CORPORATION's (hereinafter "UNION CARBIDE") Motion for 24 25 Protective Order to Enforce Stipulation, or in the Alternative, Vacate and Continue Trial Date 26 and Request for Monetary Sanctions, as joined by LAMONS GASKET COMPANY (hereinafter "LAMONS") should be denied. 27 28 /// K:\Injured\109165\pld\opp-UNIONC mpo.wpd PLAINTIFFS' OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANT UNION CARBIDE CORPORATION'S MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER TO ENFORCE STIPULATION, OR IN THE ALTERNATIVE, VACATE AND CONTINUE TRIAL DATE AND REQUEST FOR MONETARY SANCTIONS

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Neither defendant has shown that they would be subjected to "unwarranted annoyance, embarrassment, or oppression, or undue burden or expense" should Mrs. LEEPER be allowed to testify about her knowledge of defendants' asbestos-containing products being used by her husband.

The only harm that either defendant would suffer from Mrs. LEEPER's testimony is that the truth would be come out, both in discovery and in trial.'

Because neither defendant can make any showing of why they would need further time to prepare for trial in light of Mrs. LEEPER's product identification testimony, their alternative request for a continuance of the trial date should be denied. This is especially true, in that Mr. LEEPER is dying of mesothelioma, asbestosis and asbestos-related pleural disease and his treating physician has already provided this Court with her declaration stating that she has substantial medical doubt that he would survive beyond three months.

Lastly, as plaintiffs and plaintiffs' counsel have acted in good faith and their opposition to this motion has substantial justification, they should not be momentarily sanctioned should this Court grant this Motion for Protective Order. Further, UNION CARBIDE is not entitled to monetary sanctions should it lose this Motion for Protective Order, as a matter of law.

II.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

DAMON LEEPER is 73 years of age and is dying from mesothelioma, asbestosis and asbestos-related pleural disease. Though his treating physician, Barbara Gitlitz, M.D., in her declaration dated June 25, 2014, expressed her substantial medical doubts that he would survive beyond three months, this Court denied plaintiffs' Motion for Preference, but maintained the current trial date of October 20, 2014. (Plaintiffs' Motion for Preference.)

Plaintiffs and plaintiffs' counsel were acting in good faith when, on May 15, 2014, a stipulation was entered into that she did not possess any "product identification" information. Based upon Mrs. LEEPER's recollection at the time, it was believed by plaintiffs' counsel that she did not have any knowledge of the asbestos- containing products to which Mr. LEEPER had been exposed. (Declaration of Eric. C. Solomon.)

LEGAL ARGUMENT

UNION CARBIDE asserts that it is entitled to a Protective Order preventing Mrs.

identification information, allowing such testimony would "unreasonably annoy or oppress" it,

However, neither UNION CARBIDE nor LAMONS has made no showing of any

LEEPER from providing any testimony about the asbestos-containing products that she

unreasonable "annoyance" or "oppression." Simply put, what harm will befall UNION

CARBIDE or LAMONS should Mrs. LEEPER be allowed to testify? While it may not have

expected any such testimony prior to her deposition, UNION CARBIDE cannot be heard to say

that it will be unduly prejudiced by the truth of Mr. LEEPER's asbestos exposures coming out.

That is, after all, the entire purpose of pretrial discovery. (Coito v. Superior Ct. (2012) 54

Cal.4th 480, 497 ("[T]he purposes underlying the Discovery Act as a whole [are] e.g., truth

A party moving for a protective order must show that "justice requires" that it be

protected against "unwarranted annoyance, embarrassment, or oppression, or undue burden or

expense." (C.C.P. § 2025.420(b).) Generally, this requires the moving party to show that the

obtained. (See C.C.P. § 2017.020(a).) Another ground for relief would be that the information

Here, neither UNION CARBIDE nor LAMONS have made any such showing. Nor

burdens involved in the deposition clearly outweigh whatever benefits are sought to be

sought is unnecessarily commutative or that it is obtainable elsewhere at less cost and

witnessed because, in light of the earlier stipulation that she did not have any product

NEITHER UNION CARBIDE NOR LAMONS HAVE SHOWN THAT THEY ARE ENTITLED TO A PROTECTIVE ORDER TO PREVENT MRS. LEEPER

FROM TESTIFYING ABOUT THE ASBESTOS-CONTAINING PRODUCTS

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A.

citing to C.C.P. § 2025.420(b).

THAT SHE WITNESSED

seeking, efficiency, safeguarding against surprise. . . .").)

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inconvenience. (See C.C.P. § 2019.030(a).)

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The only harm that they seek to prevent is the truth about Mr. LEEPER's exposure to their asbestos and asbestos-containing products to come to light.

Mrs. LEEPER, if allowed to testify, would say that she saw the bags of KAISER GYPSUM joint compound that her husband was sanding at their Hayward home in the early '60s. She would say that her husband was up most of the night sanding those walls and that she was the one who swept up all the dust and cleaned up the following day. She would also say that she saw her husband using wallboard mud from white, five-gallon, plastic buckets, that said GEORGIA-PACIFIC on them. This occurred while her husband was building their new home in Brentwood in early '70s. Plaintiffs allege that UNION CARBIDE provided asbestos fiber that was used in those products.

With regards to LAMONS, Mrs. LEEPER would say that she saw round metal gaskets in the back of her husband's truck. She wanted to use them as "wind chimes." She saw that they had the name "LAMONS" on them. She had a friend named Lehman that reminded her of them. She asked her husband if she could have some of them. He told her "No, I'm turning them in as scrap."

UNION CARBIDE equates the stipulation to a "contract" and asserts that, therefore, it must be "enforced." However, even were the stipulation to be treated as a contract, a party asserting that the contract was breached must make a showing of damages. Here, there is no showing of any damages by either moving party. Further, were the party to seek "specific performance," as the moving parties here appear to be doing, it would have to prove, in addition to the existence of a contact that plaintiff's legal remedy is inadequate. (Blackburn v. Charnley (2004) 117 Cal. App. 4th 758, 766.) Here, neither UNION CARBIDE nor LAMONS have made any showing that its "legal remedy is inadequate."

Neither UNION CARBIDE nor LAMONS will be harmed by the fact of the delay of Mrs. LEEPER's deposition testimony with regard to asbestos-containing products for which they are responsible. Rather, UNION CARBIDE and LAMONS hope to profit by "gamesmanship" and prevent the truth from coming out in discovery and especially to prevent the jury from ever learning the truth about Mr. LEEPER's use of their products. (See,

Greyhound Corp. v. Superior Court (1961) 56 Cal. 2d 355, 376 ("Certainly, it can be said, that the Legislature intended to take the 'game' element out of trial preparation while yet retaining the adversary nature of the trial itself. One of the principal purposes of discovery was to do away 'with the sporting theory of litigation--namely, surprise at trial.' ").)

In short, the interests of justice will not be served by the suppression of the truth.

PLAINTIFFS AND PLAINTIFFS' COUNSEL HAVE ACTED IN GOOD

Plaintiffs and plaintiffs' counsel were acting in good faith when the stipulation was entered into, on May 15, 2014. Based upon Mrs. LEEPER's recollection at the time, it was believed by plaintiffs' counsel that she did not have any knowledge of the asbestos- containing

It was not until just before her deposition was to begin that plaintiffs' counsel learned that, subsequent to May 15, she had recalled a few of the products at issue herein which Mr.

It is neither surprising nor remarkable that humans recall things on one date that they could not recall on any earlier date. Neither UNION CARBIDE nor LAMONS have made any showing that plaintiffs and/or plaintiffs' counsel did anything untoward or sought any unfair

Certainly it would not have been in either the plaintiffs' nor plaintiffs' counsel's best interests to delay Mrs. LEEPER's opportunity to provide her testimony with regard to the asbestos-containing products which she saw her husband use.

NEITHER UNION CARBIDE NOR LAMONS HAVE SHOWN ANY REASON WHY THE TRIAL DATE MUST BE CONTINUED TO AVOID ANY UNDUE PREJUDICE

UNION CARBIDE claims that it will somehow be unable to prepare for trial should Mrs. LEEPER be allowed to testify regarding the things that she saw outside of her husband's work sites that would help identify some of the asbestos-containing products to which he had been exposed. Yet, UNION CARBIDE fails to identify even a single step that it would have to take to prepare for trial in the wake of Mrs. LEEPER's anticipated testimony.

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1 Tellingly, LAMONS does not even claim that it may be unable to prepare for trial if 2 Mrs. LEEPER is allowed to testify about what she saw with regard to LAMONS, it simply 3 "requests that the court vacate the pending trial date." (LAMONS' "Joinder", 2:16-17.) 4 Nonetheless, should either defendant actually need more time to prepare for trial in light of Mrs. LEEPER's product identification testimony, it would have the right to come to court and 5 seek such a continuance, upon a showing of actual good cause. 6 7 This Motion, however, is based only upon hypothetical, theoretical "good cause." 8 Further, as Mr. LEEPER would likely not survive a continuance of his trial date, it is 9 hard to see how justice would be served by a delay. UNION CARBIDE'S REQUEST FOR MONETARY SANCTIONS IS 10 D. UNWARRANTED AND UNSUPPORTED 11 12 UNION CARBIDE makes the rather bizarre claim that it is entitled to some \$2,475.00 13 in monetary sanctions should it lose this Motion. (Notice of Motion, 2:15-21.) As this Court is 14 certainly well aware, only the prevailing party can be awarded sanctions in a motion for 15 protective order. (C.C.P. § 2025.4230(d).) Thus, UNION CARBIDE cannot be awarded 16 sanctions should the Court deny this Motion for Protective Order. 17 UNION CARBIDE also seeks lesser monetary sanctions should it prevail on this Motion 18 for Protective Order. However, as explained above, plaintiffs and plaintiffs' counsel have acted 19 in good faith and oppose the imposition of any monetary sanction because they acted with 20 substantial justification. Further, it would be unjust to impose monetary sanctions in these 21 circumstances. (C.C.P. § 2025.4230(d).) 22 /// 23 /// 24 /// 25 /// 26 /// 27 ///

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CONCLUSION

Protective Order to Enforce Stipulation, or in the Alternative, Vacate and Continue Trial Date

and Request for Monetary Sanctions should be denied.

Dated: August 13, 2014

For the foregoing reasons, defendant UNION CARBIDE CORPORATION's Motion for

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BRAYTON PURCELLLLP

By:

Attorneys for Plaintiffs

PROOF OF SERVICE BY FILE & SERVEXPRESS

I am employed in the County of Marin, State of California. I am over the age of 18 years and am not a party to the within action. My business address is 222 Rush Landing Road, P.O. Box 6169, Novato, California, 94948-6169.

On August 13, 2014 I electronically served (E-Service), the following documents:

PLAINTIFFS' OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANT UNION CARBIDE CORPORATION'S MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER TO ENFORCE STIPULATION, OR IN THE ALTERNATIVE, VACATE AND CONTINUE TRIAL DATE AND REQUEST FOR MONETARY SANCTIONS

DECLARATION OF ERIC C. SOLOMON IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANT UNION CARBIDE CORPORATION'S MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER TO ENFORCE STIPULATION, OR IN THE ALTERNATIVE, VACATE AND CONTINUE TRIAL DATE AND REQUEST FOR MONETARY SANCTIONS

on the interested parties in this action by causing File & ServeXpress E-service program to transmit a true copy thereof to the following party(ies):

SEE ATTACHED SERVICE LIST

The above document was transmitted by File & ServeXpress E-Service and the transmission was reported as complete and without error.

Executed on August 13, 2014 at Novato, California.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Wanda Mie-

<u>Damon Leeper and Sondra Leeper v. Certainteed Corporation, et al.</u> Alameda County Superior Court Case No. RG14711162

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Matter Number: 109165.003 - Damon Leeper

Abbey, Weitzenberg, Warren, & Emery,

LLP 100 Stony Point Road Suite 200

Santa Rosa, CA 95401 707-542-5050 707-542-2589 (fax)

Defendants:

Anchor Darling Valve Company

(ANCDAR)

Archer Norris P.O. Box 8035 2033 N. Main Street, Suite 800 Walnut Creek, CA 94596 925-930-6600 925-930-6620 (fax)

Defendants: Albay Construction Company (ALBAY) Marconi Plastering Company, Inc.

(MARCON)

Bassi, Edlin, Huie & Blum LLP 500 Washington Street Suite 700 San Francisco, CA 94111 415-397-9006 415-397-1339 (fax) Defendants:

J.T. Thorpe & Son, Inc. (THORPE) Sequoia Ventures Inc. (SEQUOA)

Run By : Lucio, Claudia (CCL)

Becherer, Kannett & Schweitzer

Water Tower 1255 Powell Street Emeryville CA 94608-2604 510-658-3600 510-658-1151 (fax) Defendants:

Dillingham Construction N.A., Inc.

(DILGHM)

Berry & Berry P.O. Box 16070 2930 Lakeshore Avenue Oakland, CA 94610 510-835-8330 510-835-5117 (fax)

Defendants:

Berry & Berry (B&B)

Bishop, Barry, Drath Watergate Tower III 2000 Powell Street, Suite 1425 Emeryville, CA 94608 510-596-0888 510-596-0899 (fax)

Defendants:

United States Steel Corporation (fka USX Corporation) (USX)

Brydon Hugo & Parker 135 Main Street, 20th Floor San Francisco, CA 94105 415-808-0300 415-808-0333 (fax) Defendants:

Dana Companies, LLC (fka Dana

Corporation) (DANA)
Foster Wheeler LLC (FKA Foster Wheeler Corporation) (FOSTER)

Union Carbide Corporation (UNIONC)

Burnham Brown

1901 Harrison Street, 14th Floor Oakland, CA 94612 510-444-6800 510-835-6666 (fax)

Defendants: BorgWarner Morse TEC Inc., as successorby-merger to Borg-Warner Corporation

(BWMORS)

DeHay & Elliston, LLP - Oakland, CA 1111 Broadway, Ste. 1950 Oakland, CA 94607

510-285-0750 510-285-0740 (fax)

Defendants:

Kaiser Gypsum Company, Inc. (KAISGY)

Foley & Mansfield PLLP 300 South Grand Avenue, Suite 2800 Los Angeles, CA 90071 213-283-2100 213-283-2101 (fax)

Defendants: Zurn Industries, LLC (ZURN) Foley & Mansfield PLLP

300 Lakeside Drive, Suite 1900 Oakland, CA 94612 510-590-9500 510-590-9595 (fax)

Defendants: Ameron International Corporation

(AMERON)

Flowserve US Inc. (FLWSRV)
Fluor Corporation (FLUOR)
Republic Supply Company (REPBLC)
Riley Power Inc. (RILPOW)
RPI Company (RPICOM)
William Powell Company, The (WILPOW)

K & L Gates, LLP - San Francisco

Four Embarcadero Center Suite 1200

San Francisco, CA 94111 415-882-8200 415-882-8220 (fax)

Defendants:

Crane Co. (CRANCO)

Lankford Crawford Moreno & Ostertag

LLP 1850 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 600 Walnut Creek, CA 94596 925-300-3520 925-300-3386 (fax)

Defendants: Ford Motor Company (FORD) Law Offices of Lucinda L. Storm, Esq. 610A Third Street

San Francisco, CA 94107

415-777-6992 (fax) 415-777-6990 Defendants:

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)

Leader & Berkon LLP

777 S. Figueroa Street, 35th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90017 213-234-1750 213-234-1747 (fax)

Defendants:

ConocoPhillips Company (CONPHI)

Manion Gaynor & Manning LLP 444 S. Flower Street, Suite 2150 Los Angeles, CA 90071 213-622-7300 213-622-7313 (fax)

Defendants: A.W. Chesterton Company (CHESTR)

Manion Gaynor & Manning LLP 201 Spear Street, Suite 1800 San Francisco, CA 94105 415-512-4381 415-512-6791 (fax)

Defendants: Temporary Plant Cleaners, Inc. (TEMPLA)

McKenna Long & Aldridge One Market Plaza

Spear Tower, 24th Floor San Francisco, CA 94105

415-267-4000 415-267-4198 (fax) Defendants:

Certainteed Corporation (CERT)

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Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP One Market, Spear Tower San Francisco, CA 94105 415-442-1000 415-442-1001 (fax) Defendants:

Grinnell LLC (fka Grinnell Corporation,

aka Grinnell Fire) (GRINN)

Santa Fe Braun, Inc. as Successor-in-Interest to C.F. Braun, Inc. (CFBRAN) Murrin & Associates LLC 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Suite 230

Lafayette, CA 94549 925-284-5770 925-262-2111 (fax)

Defendants:

Soco West, Inc. (SOCWES)

Nixon Peabody LLP One Embarcadero Center Suite 1800 San Francisco, CA 94111-3600 415-984-8200 866-542-6538 (fax) Defendants: Shell Oil Company (SHLOIL)

Run By : Lucio, Claudia (CCL)

Perkins Cole LLP

Four Embarcadero Center, Suite 2400 San Francisco, CA 94111

415-344-7000 415-344-7050 (fax)

Defendants:

Georgia-Pacific LLC (fka Georgia-Pacific

Corporation) (GP)

Honeywell International, Inc. (HONEYW)

Pond North, LLP 350 South Grand Avenue **Suite 3300**

Los Angeles, CA 90071 213-617-6170 213-623-3594 (fax) Defendants:

CBS Corporation (fka Viacom Inc., fka Westinghouse Electric Corporation)

(VIACOM) Familian Corporation (FAMILI)

Genuine Parts Company (GPC)

Prindle, Amaro, Goetz, Hillyard, Barnes

& Reinholtz LLP 310 Golden Shore, Fourth Floor Long Beach, CA 90802 562-436-3946 562-495-0564 (fax)

Defendants:

Chevron U.S.A. Inc. (CHEUSA) Ingersoll-Rand Company (INGRSL)

Trane US, Inc. fka American Standard, Inc. (AMSTAN)

Union Oil Company of California (UNOCAL)

Prindle, Amaro, Goetz, Hillyard, Barnes & Reinholtz LLP

101 Montgomery Street, Suite 2150 San Francisco, CA 94104 415-788-8354 415-788-3625 (fax)

Defendants:

Consolidated Insulation, Inc. (CONSOL)

Sedgwick LLP 333 Bush Street

30th Floor

San Francisco, CA 94104-2834 415-781-7900 415-781-2635 (fax)

Defendants:

Tosco Corporation (TOSCO)

Selman Breitman LLP

11766 Wilshire Boulevard 6th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90025 310-445-0800 310-473-2525 (fax)

Defendants:

Keenan Properties, Inc. (KEENAN)

Selman Breitman LLP 33 New Montgomery 6th Floor San Francisco, CA 94105 415-979-0400 415-979-2099 (fax)

Defendants: Douglass Insulation Company, Inc. (DOUGLS)

Lamons Gasket Company (LAMONS)

Sinunu Bruni LLP

333 Pine Street, Suite 400 San Francisco, CA 94104

415-362-9700 415-362-9707 (fax) Defendants:

Timec Company, Inc. (TIMECO)

Steptoe & Johnson LLP 633 West Fifth St., 7th Floor Los Angeles, CA 90071 213-439-9400 213-439-9599 (fax)

Defendants:

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (MET)

Vasquez, Estrada & Conway, LLP

Courthouse Square 1000 Fourth Street, Suite 700

San Rafaell CA 94901 415-453-0555 415-453-0549 (fax)

Defendants:

SPX Codling Technologies, Inc. (fka Marley Cooling Technologies, Inc.)

(MCTINC)

Walsworth, Franklin, Bevins & McCall,

601 Montgomery Street, 9th Floor San Francisco, CA 94111 415-781-7072 415-391-6258 (fax)

Defendants:

General Electric Company (GE) Oscar E. Erickson, Inc. (OSCAR)

Thomas Dee Engineering Company (DEE) Westburne Supply, Inc. (WESSUP)