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BAMBERG COUNTY

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EXHIBIT A

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF BAMBERG

JANNIE C. JOHNSON
CLERK OF COURT
BAMBERG COUNTY

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
C/A NO.: 2018-CP-05-00242

JEROME JOHNSON, DUANE JOHNSON and
GEORGE GLOVER, SR., on behalf of themselves
and others similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

CITY OF DENMARK, SOUTH CAROLINA;
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH &
ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL and BERRY
SYSTEMS, INC.

Defendants.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT

PURSUANT TO THE COURT'S PRELIMINARY ORDER APPROVING THE PROPOSED CLASS SETTLEMENT, THIS NOTICE IS SENT TO YOU TO INFORM YOU THAT YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE BENEFITS FROM THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF A LAWSUIT FILED ON YOUR BEHALF. THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF A CLASS ACTION. YOUR RIGHTS MAY BE AFFECTED BY THE LEGAL PROCEEDINGS DESCRIBED BELOW.

IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO BE PART OF THE SETTLEMENT, YOU MUST TAKE THE STEPS DESCRIBED IN THIS NOTICE TO OPT OUT NO LATER THAN MAY 5, 2025. OTHERWISE, YOU WILL BE BOUND BY ALL OF THE TERMS OF THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU MAY CALL (803) 943-4444 AND SPEAK TO A REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE CLASS.

PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT THE COURT, THE CLERK OF COURT, OR THE DEFENDANTS.

You have been sent this Class Notice because you may be eligible to receive benefits that will be provided as part of a proposed settlement of a class action lawsuit pending in the Court of Common Pleas, County of Bamberg, South Carolina (the "Court"), against City of Denmark, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, and Berry Systems, Inc. (collectively,

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“Defendants”).

The lawsuit seeks compensatory damages and other relief stemming from use of Halosan, a chemical, in the City of Denmark Water System. This settlement is for property damages and breach of contract only and specifically excludes any personal injury. Plaintiffs have alleged that Defendants’ business practices violated South Carolina law, and Defendants deny any violations or liability on any individual or class claim.

The Plaintiffs and Defendants have concluded that settlement is desirable and in the best interests of the parties and the Class Members because of the uncertainty, expenses, risks, and delays of litigation. *Settlement benefits will be available only if the Court approves the settlement.* On Monday, May 19, 2025, at 10:00 A.M., the Court will hold a hearing (the “Fairness Hearing”) to decide whether to approve the proposed settlement.

The Settlement Class is defined as follows:

All citizens of South Carolina and businesses incorporated or organized under the laws of South Carolina, or with a principal place of business in South Carolina, who paid water bills to the City of Denmark within three years of July 24, 2018, which represents the date of the Cease Use Order issued by the Department of Pesticide Regulation at Clemson University to the City of Denmark.

The Settlement Class does not include any persons who validly opt out of this Settlement.

If you are a Class Member, you need to decide whether you want to participate in the Settlement Class or whether you want to opt out and be excluded from the Settlement Class.

If you do not want to be in the Settlement Class, you must send written notice of your intention to opt out to the address set forth below so that it is postmarked no later than May 5, 2025. The written notice must state as follows:

I request to be excluded from the Settlement Class. I understand that this exclusion means that I will not receive any benefit available under the proposed settlement.

Your written notice also must contain your name and address and must be signed and dated by you in your individual capacity, not by any representative. Failure to comply with any of these requirements may result in your written notice being declared invalid. If you do not want to be part of the Settlement Class, send your written election to opt out to the following address:

A. Gibson Solomons, III
Speights & Solomons, LLC
100 Oak Street East
Hampton, South Carolina 29924

If you exclude yourself, you will not receive any benefit available under the proposed Settlement and you will not be bound by any orders or judgments entered in this case. If you do not request exclusion, any and all claims, demands, obligations, actions, causes of action, rights, damages, losses, liabilities, debts, costs, and attorneys' fees, except as provided for herein, which the Releasing Parties have, had, or may have related to the Defendants' practices of entering into Deferred Presentment Services Transactions, which were or could have been asserted in the Action, or which arise out of or in any way relate to the facts, acts, events, transactions, occurrences, courses of conduct, representations, omissions, circumstances, or other matters referenced in this Action, will be waived and released.

If you want to be eligible to receive benefits available to members of the Settlement Class, YOU DO NOT NEED TO DO ANYTHING.

Benefits and Consequences of Participation in the Settlement Class:

If the Settlement is approved, Class Members who do not exclude themselves from the Settlement Class and who properly submit a Claim Form by the deadline will be eligible for a one-time pro rata payment from the one-million-dollar (\$1,000,000) Settlement Fund. **The fund will be divided amongst all of the class members, after fees and costs. Your share of the fund will be determined by the amount of months that you paid for water with the City of Denmark.** Please feel free to contact the Settlement Administrator with any questions. Class Members will also receive settlement relief in that the City of Denmark will bear the cost of Class Notice. Further, DHEC agrees to provide technical assistance to the City of Denmark with an application for grant funds allocated either from the State Revolving Fund or Rural Infrastructure Administration related to upfitting, modification, and/or infrastructure needs for its water system as identified by the City of Denmark Water System. Further, Defendant DHEC agrees to assist with notice of the settlement of the above-captioned matter by displaying this notice on its webpage, said webpage information to be included in the bill insert notice issued by City of Denmark.

The Court has designated the following counsel to represent the Settlement Class for purposes of settlement of this lawsuit:

Bakari T. Sellers
Mario A. Pacella
Strom Law Firm, LLC
6923 N. Trenholm Rd.
Columbia, South Carolina 29206

A. Gibson Solomons, III
Speights & Solomons, LLC
100 Oak Street East
Hampton, South Carolina 29924

You will not be charged for the services of these or any other counsel representing the Settlement Class in this Action. You have the right to retain your own attorney in this matter, but, if you do, you will be responsible for paying your own attorneys' fees and expenses.

Plaintiffs will apply to the Court for an award of reasonable attorneys' fees and costs on behalf of the counsel who have represented the Plaintiffs in this class action. If the Court approves this application, the attorneys' fees and costs will be paid from the Settlement Fund. Plaintiffs intend to request a sum not to exceed one-third of the Settlement Fund, or \$333,333.33 for attorneys' fees and costs not to exceed \$33,964.74.

The Court will hold the Fairness Hearing on Monday, May 19, 2025, at 10:00 A.M., in the courtroom of the Honorable Clifton Newman, Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, County of Bamberg, South Carolina, Bamberg Civic Center, 2477 Main Highway, Bamberg, South Carolina 29003, to consider whether to approve the proposed Settlement and to determine the amount of attorneys' fees and expenses to award to Class Counsel and the amount of administering the Settlement.

Unless you request exclusion from the Settlement Class, you may file a written objection, postmarked on or before May 5, 2025, to any aspect of the proposed Settlement, other than individual claim disputes, or the amount of attorneys' fees or administration fees. If you do not request exclusion, you will be bound by the orders and judgments entered in this case. Each written objection must be signed by the Class Member and must include (i) your name, address, and telephone number, (ii) the name of this case and the case number, (iii) a statement of each objection; and (iv) a written explanation detailing the specific reasons, if any, for each objection, including any legal and factual support the objector wishes to bring to the Court's attention and any evidence the objector intends to introduce in support of the objection(s).

Objections should be sent to the following addresses:

Clerk of Court
Post Office Box 150
Bamberg, South Carolina 29003

And

A. Gibson Solomons, III
Speights & Solomons, LLC
100 Oak Street East
Hampton, South Carolina 29924

Barbara J. Wagner
Barnwell Whaley
Post Office Drawer H
Charleston, South Carolina 29402

Andrew F. Lindemann, Esq.
Lindemann & Davis
Post Office Box 6923
Columbia, South Carolina 29260

Morgan S. Templeton, Esq.
Wall Templeton
Post Office Box 1200
Charleston, South Carolina 29402

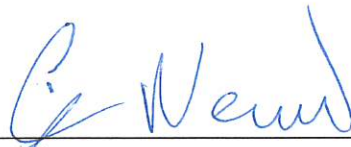
Your written objection(s) must be received no later than May 5, 2025.

If you file and serve a timely written objection, you may appear at the Fairness Hearing, either in person or through an attorney retained and paid by you. If you or your attorney intends to appear at the Fairness Hearing, you or your attorney must file a notice of intention to appear with the Clerk of the Court by no later than May 5, 2025, with copies received by Class Counsel and Defendants' Counsel, at the addresses provided above.

Please call (803) 943-4444 with any questions you may have about the settlement.

PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE COURT, THE CLERK OF COURT, OR THE DEFENDANTS.

DATED: February 28, 2025.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Clifton Newman", written over a horizontal line.

Hon. Clifton Newman
Judge, Court of Common Pleas