| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 | Richard K. Bridgford, Esq., SBN: 119554 Michael H. Artinian, Esq., SBN: 203443 BRIDGFORD, GLEASON & ARTINIAN 26 Corporate Plaza, Suite 250 Newport Beach, CA 92660 Telephone: (949) 831-6611 Facsimile: (949) 831-6622 Brian S. Kabateck, Esq., SBN: 152054 Joshua H. Haffner, Esq., SBN: 188652 KABATECK BROWN KELLNER LLP 644 South Figueroa Street Los Angeles, CA 90017 Telephone: (213) 217-5000 | ELECTRONICALLY FILED Superior Court of California, County of Orange 02/01/2016 at 06:03:00 PM Clerk of the Superior Court By Georgina Ramirez, Deputy Clerk | |
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| 16 | SUPERIOR COURT OF THE | E STATE OF CALIFORNIA | |
| 17 | COUNTY OF ORANGE – CIVIL COMPLEX CENTER | | |
| 18 | KAMAL ALI, an individual; and ZAINAB | CASE NO. 30-2013-00689593-CU-CD-CXC | |
| 19 | ALI, an individual; JOHN TORPHY, an individual, and ELIZABETH TORPHY, an | Assigned for all purposes to: Judge Thierry Patrick Colaw | |
| 20 | individual (as Trustees of the JOHN C. TORPHY AND ELIZABETH M. TORPHY | Dept. CX-105 | |
| 21 | TRUST DATED 5/5/2004); on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated, | FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT | |
| 22 | Plaintiffs, | HIDW TOTAL NEWANDED | |
| 23 | VS. | JURY TRIAL DEMANDED | |
| 24 | WARMINGTON RESIDENTIAL | Complaint Filed: 11/21/13 | |
| 25 | CALIFORNIA, INC., a Corporation; REBCO COMMUNITIES, INC. f/k/a WARMINGTON HOMES CALIFORNIA, | | |
| 26 | INC., a Corporation; PLUMBING CONCEPTS, INC., a Corporation; | | |
| 27 | MUELLER INDUSTRIES, INC., a Corporation; and DOES 1-100, | | |
| 28 | Defendants. | | |

1 FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT

1 REBCO COMMUNITIES, INC. f/k/a WARMINGTON HOMES CALIFORNIA, 2 INC., a Corporation, 3 Cross-Complainant, 4 VS. 5 ROBBINS PLUMBING AND HEATING, INC., a Corporation, and ROES 1-100, 6 inclusive. 7 Cross-Defendants. 8 AND RELATED CROSS-ACTION. 9 10 Plaintiffs KAMAL ALI and ZAINAB ALI, and JOHN TORPHY and ELIZABETH 11 TORPHY, (as Trustees of the JOHN C. TORPHY AND ELIZABETH M. TORPHY TRUST 12 DATED 5/5/2004) on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated ("Plaintiffs"), are 13 informed, believe and allege as follows: 14 INTRODUCTION 15 1. This is a class action addressing solely the incorporation of a single defective 16 component (copper pipe) into a residence, thus exempting Plaintiffs (and the named and unnamed 17 class members) pursuant to Civil Code section 931 from complying with the pre-litigation 18 procedures specified in Division 2, Part 2, Title 7, Chapter 4. Plaintiffs seek damages and other 19 relief on behalf of all similarly-situated homeowners in Ladera Ranch, California, whose homes 20 were built by Defendants WARMINGTON RESIDENTIAL CALIFORNIA, INC., and REBCO 21 COMMUNITIES, INC. f/k/a WARMINGTON HOMES CALIFORNIA, INC. (collectively 22 "Warmington"), who have suffered damage because of owning homes with a defective component, 23 to wit, copper pipe. The copper pipe at issue is defective, and damages Plaintiffs' and class 24 members' homes in violation of the standards of residential construction set forth in California 25 Civil Code §895, et seq. 26 2. The homes at issue are located in Ladera Ranch, Orange County, including but not 27 limited to, homes in the 92694 zip code (the "Class Area"). Plaintiffs are informed and believe,

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Class Area.

- 3. The homes have in common a serious defect, namely the incorporation of defective copper pipe instead of stronger resistive pipe.
 - 4. Plaintiffs bring this action to seek redress on behalf of the following class:

 All homeowners in the Class Area whose residences contain copper pipe, were constructed by Warmington and substantially completed within ten (10) years of the filing of the original complaint in this action, and the original purchase agreements were signed by the builder on or after January 1, 2003.

THE PARTIES

- Plaintiffs Kamal and Zainab Ali are individuals and residents of Ladera Ranch,
 California, whose principal residence is located at 4 Tranquility Place, Ladera Ranch, California
 92694.
- 6. Plaintiffs John and Elizabeth Torphy (as Trustees of John C. Torphy & Elizabeth M. Torphy Trust dated 5/5/2004) are individuals and residents of Ladera Ranch, California, whose principal residence is located at 7 Anapamu Street, Ladera Ranch, California 92694.
- 7. Plaintiffs' and the class members' homes at issue in this action are all residences in Ladera Ranch, California, including but not limited to, homes in the 92694 zip code, that contain or contained copper pipe, were substantially completed within ten (10) years of the filing of the original complaint in this action, whose original purchase agreements were signed by the builder on or after January 1, 2003, and are collectively referred to herein as the "Subject Homes."
- 8. Plaintiffs are informed and believe and based thereon allege that at all times relevant, defendant Warmington Residential California, Inc. was or is a business entity engaged in business in the State of California.
- 9. Plaintiffs dismissed Warmington Residential California, Inc. without prejudice based on Defendant's representation of Non-Involvement in the building of homes in the area (Ladera Ranch) at issue in this lawsuit. Defendant REBCO Communities Inc. f/k/a Warmington Homes California, Inc. was doed in based on Defendant's representations. However, it was agreed that Plaintiffs could rename Warmington Residential California, Inc. at their discretion, and that all statutes of limitations were tolled. Plaintiffs herein rename Warmington Residential California,

Inc. as a defendant in this matter.

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- 10. Plaintiffs are informed and believe and based thereon allege that at all times relevant, defendant REBCO Communities Inc. f/k/a Warmington Homes California, Inc. was or is a business entity engaged in business in the State of California.
- 11. After being named as a defendant, REBCO Communities Inc. f/k/a Warmington Homes California, Inc. declared Chapter 7 Bankruptcy. However, the Bankruptcy Court granted Plaintiffs' request for relief from the Bankruptcy Stay on August 5, 2014.
- 12. Plaintiffs are informed and believe and thereon allege that defendants Warmington Residential California, Inc. and REBCO Communities Inc. f/k/a Warmington Homes California, Inc. have, and at all times herein mentioned had, a joint economic and business interest, goal and purpose in the properties and related services sold to plaintiffs and class members.
- 13. As an alternative theory, plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that defendants Warmington Residential California, Inc. and REBCO Communities Inc. f/k/a Warmington Homes California, Inc., are alter egos of each other. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that these Warmington defendants share common directors, officers, and/or executives. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that there is common control over the Warmington defendants, and they operate pursuant to a common business plan. There is unity of interest among these defendants. The alter-ego relationship among the Warmington defendants should be recognized to prevent an injustice. If the alter-ego relationship among them is not recognized, an inequity will result because an entity responsible for wrongdoing will be shielded from liability.
- 14. The term "Warmington" refers to defendants Warmington Residential California, Inc. and REBCO Communities Inc. f/k/a Warmington Homes California, Inc. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that defendant Warmington constructed the Subject Homes, and supplied and/or distributed the copper pipe at issue used in class members' homes.
- 15. Plaintiffs are informed and believe and based thereon allege that at all times relevant, defendant Mueller Industries, Inc. ("Mueller") was or is a business entity, engaged in business in the State of California. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege,

that defendant Mueller designed, manufactured, supplied and/or distributed the copper pipe at issue used in class members' homes.

- 16. As used herein, the term "defendants" refers collectively to all defendants named herein.
- 17. Plaintiffs are informed, believe, and thereupon allege that defendants, including DOES, are/were involved in the planning, development, design, construction, warranting, repair, selection of materials, supply of materials, installation of materials and/or sale of the Subject Homes, and/or were responsible for the design, development, testing, manufacture, distribution, supply, marketing, sale, and warranting of the Subject Homes in Ladera Ranch, California that contain the copper pipe at issue.
- 18. Plaintiffs are currently ignorant of the true names and capacities, whether individual, corporate, associate, or otherwise, of the defendants sued herein under the fictitious names Does 1 through 100, inclusive, and therefore, sue such defendants by such fictitious names. Plaintiffs will seek leave to amend this complaint to allege the true names and capacities of said fictitiously named defendants when their true names and capacities have been ascertained. Plaintiffs are informed and believe and thereon allege that each of the fictitiously named Doe Defendants legally responsible in some manner for the events and occurrences alleged herein, and for the damages suffered by the class.
- 19. Plaintiffs are informed and believe and thereon allege that all defendants, including the fictitious Doe defendants, were at all relevant times acting as actual agents, conspirators, ostensible agents, alter egos, partners and/or joint venturers and/or employees of all other defendants, and that all acts alleged herein occurred within the course and scope of said agency, employment, partnership, alter ego relationship, and joint venture, conspiracy or enterprise, and with the express and/or implied permission, knowledge, consent, authorization and ratification of their co-defendants; however, each of these allegations are deemed "alternative" theories whenever not doing so would result in a contradiction with other allegations.
- 20. Does 1-50, whose identities are presently unknown, are the subject of ongoing discovery and therefore are sued under fictitious names. Does 1-50 were involved in the planning,

development, design, construction, warranting, repair, selection of materials, supply of materials, installation of materials and/or sale of the Subject Homes, which contain the defective copper pipe at issue, and proximately caused the injuries and damages herein alleged. Plaintiffs will seek leave to amend this Complaint to allege their true names and capacities as they are ascertained.

- Does 51-100, whose identities are presently unknown, are the subject of ongoing discovery and therefore are sued under fictitious names. Does 51-100 were responsible for and engaged in the design, development, testing, manufacture, distribution, supply, marketing, sale, and warranting of the defective copper pipe at issue. Plaintiffs will seek leave to amend this Complaint to allege their true names and capacities as they are ascertained.
- 22. All allegations in this complaint are based on information and belief and/or are likely to have-evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for further investigation or discovery. Whenever allegations in this complaint are contrary or inconsistent, such allegations shall be deemed alternative:

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 23. The contracts at issue in this case were entered into, approved and/or ratified within the venue of this Court. Venue as to each defendant is proper in this judicial district pursuant to Business & Professions Code section 17203, and Code of Civil Procedure sections 395(a) and 395.5.
- 24. Jurisdiction is proper in this Court. Federal jurisdiction over this action does not exist. The amount in controversy as to the representative plaintiffs does not exceed \$75,000.00, including interest and any pro rata award of attorneys' fees and costs. The damages, attorneys' fees and costs of individual class members may not be aggregated to meet the federal jurisdictional amount.

GENERAL ALLEGATIONS

- 25. Defendants installed and used defective copper pipe in the Subject Homes.
 Defendants manufactured, designed, supplied, distributed, warranted, the copper pipe at issue, and/or constructed numerous homes utilizing it.
 - 26. These Subject Homes are located in a number of subdivisions throughout the

Ladera Ranch area of Orange County, including but not limited to, homes in the 92694 zip code (the "Class Area"). Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that the copper pipe utilized in the Subject Homes was defective for the water conditions in the Class Area, and damages Plaintiffs' and class members' homes in violation of the standards of residential construction set forth in California Civil Code §895, et seq.

- 27. The homes have in common a serious defect, namely the incorporation of defective copper pipe instead of stronger resistive pipe.
- 28. Plaintiffs Kamal and Zainab Ali, and John and Elizabeth Torphy, purchased two of the Subject Homes, containing the defective copper pipe, which has caused damage to their homes.
- 29. Plaintiffs are informed, believe, and thereupon allege that the above-referenced defective condition violates the standards of residential construction set forth in California Civil Code §895, et seq. and has proximately caused damage to homeowners who are members of the class.
- 30. Plaintiffs are informed, believe and thereupon allege that the Builders' contractors are agents of the builders. One such contractor has confirmed in sworn deposition testimony that it has known about pinhole leaks in copper pipe in South Orange County for years prior to building the Subject Homes. Despite this clear notice, they failed to warn the homeowners of possible defects, neglected to select proper pipe for the water type, and incorporated a defective component pipe into the residences.
- 31. Plaintiffs are informed, believe, and thereupon allege that the builders and/or their contractors received reports of numerous complaints that gave them notice of the defect inherent in the copper pipe incorporated into residences in the class area, including complaints of pinhole leaks, for homes in Orange County, prior to building the subject homes.
- 32. Plaintiffs are informed, believe and based thereupon allege that the builder and/or their contractors have tested the water and/or pipe installed in the homes prior to installing copper pipe into the subject homes, and had information prior to incorporating the copper pipe into the residences confirming that the copper pipe installed in the homes was defective.
 - 33. Each of the named Plaintiffs and class members have a contract and/or are in privity

with defendants and/or are third party beneficiaries of contracts. Plaintiffs reserve the right to amend their complaint to attach a copy of the contracts and warranties at issue after an appropriate opportunity for discovery.

- 34. Plaintiffs and the class members' homes have an actionable defect which violates the standards set forth in California Civil Code §895, et seq. Individual product manufacturers, material suppliers, builders, general contractors, and subcontractors are subject to an action for recovery of damages for the violation of the standards enumerated in California Civil Code section 895, et seq.
- 35. Plaintiffs and class members will be required to retain the services of experts and consultants to investigate the nature and extent of the defect, and seek damages for those investigative costs pursuant to California Civil Code section 944.
- 36. Plaintiffs have incurred, and will incur during the pendency of this action, attorney's fees and costs, which are necessary for the prosecution of this action and will result in a benefit to members of the class. This action will result in the enforcement of important rights supported by a strong public policy affecting the public interest which will confer a significant benefit on the general public and a large class of persons, where the necessity and burden of private enforcement are such as to make an award appropriate pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure section 1021.5.
- 37. Plaintiffs allege and assert that its claims and this legal action have all been brought in a timely manner and within the statute of limitations and repose periods, if applicable. The defect in the copper pipe, as alleged herein, is latent in nature. Plaintiffs and class members did not discover, and could not reasonably have discovered, its defective nature until a date within the statute of limitations for each cause of action alleged.
- 38. To the fullest extent of the law, Plaintiffs seek recovery for injuries and/or damages to property.

CLASS ALLEGATIONS

39. The class consists of:

All homeowners in the Class Area whose residences contain copper pipe, were constructed by Warmington and substantially

completed within ten (10) years of the filing of the original complaint in this action, and the original purchase agreements were signed by the builder on or after January 1, 2003.

- 40. The class is so numerous that joinder would be impractical and disposition of the class members' claims in a class action is in the best interests of the parties and judicial economy.
- 41. This action involves questions of law and fact common to each member of the class, in that all members of the proposed class have suffered damages as a result of the installation of defective copper pipe in their homes. The common questions of law and fact include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Whether the copper pipe was defective for the water conditions in the Class Area;
 - b. Whether Defendants had notice, and the degree of notice that they had, of the water conditions in the Class Area;
 - c. Whether California Civil Code sections 896(a)(14) and/or (15) were violated by the incorporation, selection, design, manufacture, supply and/or utilization of the pipe at issue herein.
 - d. Whether defendants violated the "unlawful" prong of the UCL;
 - e. Whether defendants violated the "fraudulent" prong of the UCL;
 - f. Whether the Warmington defendants are alter egos, or otherwise jointly liable;
 - g. Whether any defenses raised are meritorious;
 - h. Whether the copper pipe at issue has corroded; and
 - i. Whether the copper pipe at issue needs to be removed and replaced.
- 42. The claims of the Plaintiffs and relief herein sought are typical of the claims and relief that could generally be sought by each member of this proposed class.
- 43. Plaintiffs can fairly and adequately protect the interests of all members of the proposed class. The Subject Homes all contain defective copper pipe at issue herein.
- 44. Prosecution of separate actions by individual members of the proposed class would create a risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications with respect to individual members of the class and thus establish incompatible standards of conduct for the party or parties opposing the class. Further, the relatively small amounts of the individual claims mean that class treatment is the

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and/or (15) were violated by Defendants' incorporation, selection, design, manufacture, supply and/or utilization of the defective pipe at issue herein that has leaked and/or corroded so as to impede the useful life of the system – a statutory violation of law.

- 54. Defendants' <u>fraudulent</u> conduct includes, but is not limited to, concealing from both original and subsequent purchasers that the copper pipe installed in the Subject Homes was not compatible and adequate for the water conditions in the area, which defendants knew or should have known; Defendants had express knowledge that the pipe used would corrode and/or leak given the water conditions in the class area, and failed to disclose the same to original and subsequent purchasers of the Subject Homes. As previously herein alleged, the builders and/or their contractors received reports of numerous complaints that gave them notice of the defect inherent in the copper pipe incorporated into residences in the class area, including complaints of pinhole leaks, for homes in Orange County, prior to building the subject homes; and the builders and/or contractors have tested the water and/or pipe installed in the homes prior to installing copper pipe into the subject homes, and had information prior to incorporating the copper pipe into the residences evidencing that the copper pipe installed in the homes was defective. Plaintiffs relied upon Defendants accurately disclosing the impact of the water on the copper pipe which did not meet the building standards set forth at Civ. Code Section 896(a)(14) and/or (15).
- 55. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' unlawful and/or fraudulent conduct described hereinabove, Plaintiffs and the putative class have suffered actual injury and economic loss in the form of diminution in the effective life of the copper pipe and diminution in the useful life of the plumbing system on the whole, in addition to diminution in value of the Subject Homes.
- 56. On behalf of the general public, plaintiffs and members of each class request that this Court order that Defendants be required to disgorge the profits they have wrongfully obtained through the use of these unlawful, unfair or fraudulent practices, provide restitution, and that an injunction issue to correct the wrongful business practices alleged in this complaint.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

(Breach of Express Warranties)

(By Plaintiffs Against Defendants Mueller and Does 51-100)

- 57. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate by reference all preceding paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully set forth herein.
- 58. Plaintiffs and their members had a contract and/or were privity with defendants and/or were the intended third-party beneficiaries of each and every such act and/or warranty.
- 59. Plaintiffs and class members have performed all conditions to be performed by them pursuant to their real estate purchase and sale agreements, or were excused from such performance as a result of Defendants' conduct.
- 60. Defendants Mueller and Does 51-100 did prepare, distribute, and provide express warranties regarding the copper pipe installed at the Subject Homes. These warranties provide coverage for certain defects in this copper pipe. These warranties were intended for use by customers and end-users of the copper pipe, including Plaintiffs and the class members.
- 61. Defendants Mueller and Does 51-100 expressly warranted in writing to Plaintiffs and the class members that the copper pipe used in the Subject Homes was adequate and proper for the Class Area.
- 62. Plaintiffs reserve the right to amend this complaint to attach copies of the written warranties made and/or to more clearly allege the express warranties made, after a reasonable opportunity for discovery.
- 63. Plaintiffs are informed, believe, and thereupon allege that Defendants Mueller and Does 51-100 breached the express warranties made by incorporating defective copper pipe into the Subject Residences.
- 64. As a direct and proximate result of the breaches of the express warranties by defendants as herein alleged, Plaintiffs and their members have been, and will continue to be, caused damage as more fully described herein.
- 65. As a further direct and proximate result of the breaches of the express warranties by defendants as herein alleged, Plaintiffs and their members have suffered injuries and/or damages to

As a direct and proximate result of the breaches of the implied warranties by

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73.

| 1 | 12. For such other and further | r relief as the Court deems just and proper. |
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| 3 | DATED: February 1, 2016 | BRIDGFORD, GLEASON & ARTINIAN KABATECK BROWN KELLNER LLP |
| 4 | | McNICHOLAS & McNICHOLAS |
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| 6 7 | | By: //// Richard K. Bridgford |
| 8 | | Michael H. Artinian Brian S. Kabateck |
| 9 | | Joshua H. Haffner |
| 10 | | John Patrick McNicholas, IV Attorneys for Plaintiff on behalf of themselves |
| 11 | | and all others similarly situated |
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DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiffs hereby demand a trial by jury of all claims and causes of action in this lawsuit. DATED: February 1, 2016 Michael H. Artinian Brian S. Kabateck Joshua H. Haffner

BRIDGFORD, GLEASON & ARTINIAN McNICHOLAS & McNICHOLAS LLP KABATECK BROWN KELLNER LLP

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John Patrick McNicholas, IV

Attorneys for Plaintiffs on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated

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PROOF OF SERVICE

Ali v. Warmington Residential California, Inc., et al. Orange County Superior Court Case No.: 30-2013-00689593

I, the undersigned, declare that:

I am over the age of 18 years and not a party to the within action. I am employed in the County where the Proof of Service was prepared and my business address is Law Offices of BRIDGFORD, GLEASON & ARTINIAN, 26 Corporate Plaza, Suite 250, Newport Beach, CA 92660.

On the date set forth below, I served the following document(s): <u>FIRST</u> <u>AMENDED</u> COMPLAINT on the interested party(s):

SEE ATTACHED SERVICE LIST

by the following means:

- () BY MAIL: By placing a true copy thereof, enclosed in a sealed envelope with postage thereon fully prepaid. I am readily familiar with the business practice for collecting and processing correspondence for mailing. On the same day that correspondence is processed for collection and mailing it is deposited in the ordinary course of business with the United States Postal Service in Newport Beach, California to the address(es) shown herein.
- () BY PERSONAL SERVICE: By placing a true copy thereof, enclosed in a sealed envelope, I caused such envelope to be delivered by hand to the recipients herein shown (as set forth on the service list).
- () BY OVERNIGHT DELIVERY: I served the foregoing document by Overnight Delivery as follows: I placed true copies of the foregoing document in sealed envelopes or packages designated by the express service carrier, addressed to recipients shown herein (as set forth on the service list), with fees for overnight delivery paid or provided for.
- (X) BY ELECTRONIC MAIL (EMAIL): I caused a true copy thereof sent via email to the address(s) shown herein.

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

Dated: February 1, 2016

Debbie Knipe

SERVICE LIST

Ali v. Warmington Residential California, Inc., et al. Orange County Superior Court Case No.: 30-2013-00689593

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