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## **Green Project, Inc., Maker of Recycled Ink and Toner Cartridges, Files Counter-suit Against Corporate Giant Epson**

### **Entrepreneurial Company Seeks Damages for Trade Secret Misappropriation and Trespass**

LOS ANGELES, Calif., July 29, 2009 -- A counter-suit against Epson America Inc. and Seiko Epson Corp., one of the world's largest inkjet manufacturers, was filed Monday, July 27, 2009, by Green Project Inc. ([www.greenprojectinc.com](http://www.greenprojectinc.com)), a Los Angeles-based, environmentally dedicated entrepreneurial company that recycles ink and toner cartridges.

The suit, filed in U.S. District Court, District of Oregon, alleges unfair competition, seeks a declaratory judgment for non-infringement of Epson's patents, accuses the Japanese-headquartered conglomerate of trade secret misappropriation and trespass, and denies Epson's allegation of patent infringement.

Green Project, which operates from Hacienda Heights in Los Angeles County, was added on June 18 to a lawsuit filed by Epson earlier this year. Epson's suit is against a group of suppliers that make "compatible" after-market inkjet cartridges that work with Epson printers, and who also recycle Epson's cartridges. (Green Project does not make compatibles; it only recycles original inkjet cartridges.)

Joseph Wu, president of Green Project, explained, "We are puzzled by Epson's corporate policy of punishing recyclers of used inkjet cartridges, companies that provide critically needed environmental benefits for everyone. Used cartridges are extremely damaging to the environment, both the plastic framework that does not degrade in landfills and the toxic ink left inside the cartridges that seeps into the soil.

"Our company and companies like ours are working hard to offset the incredible damage being done by discarded cartridges. Studies show that as many as 350 million cartridges wind up in landfills throughout North America each year. We are unaware of any other inkjet manufacturer that continues to take such a harsh environmental stance, as does Epson," added Wu.

The counter-suit against Epson is being pursued by Green Project not only to gain relief from the patent infringement case against the defendants, but also to seek damages against Epson and one of its employees, Herbert W. Seitz, who is accused of surreptitiously gaining access to Green Project's premises and to the company's competitive business information by pretending to be a potential customer.

Wu said the actions by Seitz, acting on behalf of his employer Epson, are both illegal and morally reprehensible. “Basically, Epson was spying on us, including gaining sensitive pricing information, through false pretenses. He used a false name and a fabricated company to gain access.”

Thomas Chan, managing partner of Chan Law Group, counsel to Green Project, said, “This is a clear-cut case of a major international corporation bullying a start-up company using legal tactics without merit and, even worse, using false identity to gain trade secret information on its competitors.”

Explaining why Green Project is seeking declaratory judgment for non-infringement of Epson’s patents, Chan said, “The law is clear: once the inkjet cartridge is sold to the public by the patent owner, under the well established ‘First Sale Doctrine’, the patent owner’s rights end. Our client takes the discarded cartridge, cleans it and refills it for a subsequent user. In so doing, Green Project preserves the environment, helps the economy by operating a small business and gives consumers an alternate product at a reduced cost.”

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#### Green Project, Inc.

Based in Hacienda Heights, Calif., Green Project Inc. is a fast-growing start-up that specializes in remanufacturing ink and toner cartridges. The company provides products for all of the major manufacturers of inkjet printers, including inkjet cartridges and laser toners. The company has a strong environmental orientation and has chosen to focus on providing recycled products, thus saving the earth from further environmental harm caused by discarded inkjet cartridges and used ink. More information is available at [www.greenprojectinc.com](http://www.greenprojectinc.com).

#### Chan Law Group LLP

Chaired by Thomas T. Chan, Chan Law Group is a Los Angeles-based, boutique intellectual property law and business law firm. Chan previously served as trade advisor to the U.S. Trade Representative and to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce. He was instrumental in the formation of the Business Software Alliance based in Washington D.C. and was responsible for filing the first antitrust lawsuit against Microsoft in 1993. More information is available at [www.chanlaw.com](http://www.chanlaw.com).