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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Date: January 12, 2011
Re: Television Manufacturers Settle
Screen Measurement Case

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Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that several television manufacturers have entered into settlements regarding how the screen size measurements of televisions are advertised to consumers.

Stanislaus County was joined by six other counties in bringing a consumer protection regulatory action against LG Electronics, Panasonic, Samsung, Sharp and Sony. The action was filed in Alameda County and on December 30, 2010, a stipulated final judgment was signed by the Honorable C. Don Clay, Judge of the Superior Court, resolving the matter. The manufacturers, all of whom stipulated to the judgment without admitting liability, are now subject to an injunction that clarifies how screen size measurements are to be represented in the future. They agreed to contribute a total of \$1,125,000 worth of televisions or other audio-visual equipment to schools and other public institutions throughout California. They also agreed to pay investigative costs and other relief in the total amount of \$1,250,000.

The Stanislaus County Weights and Measures Department brought this consumer issue to the attention of the Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office following a local consumer complaint. A preliminary investigation by Weights and Measures Departments from several counties revealed that a substantial number of televisions had an actual diagonal screen measurement different from what was represented. Viewable picture size is one of a number of characteristics that are disclosed to consumers on packaging of television sets, brochures, owners' manuals and, in certain instances, advertising. The manufacturers and sellers historically described the viewable screen sizes of the television models they manufacture and/or sell by rounding the number of inches, measured diagonally, to the nearest whole number. For example, a television that was described as "40 inches diagonal" or "40 inches" might have had an actual diagonal viewable picture screen size that was smaller or larger than 40 inches. This practice of rounding to the nearest integer was a long-standing, industry-wide practice. It was the opinion of the District Attorneys that this practice was incompatible with existing law.

The manufacturers have cooperated fully with the District Attorneys by voluntarily changing their practices. For the last four years, the named manufacturers have been posting, in a clear and conspicuous manner, the viewable diagonal picture sizes of the television sets to the nearest tenth of an inch while also referring to the "class size" of the televisions.

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