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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: September 25, 2013 **Contact:** Jonathan Raven, Chief Deputy District Attorney
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**Rite Aid Corporation to Pay \$12 Million Settlement
for Environmental Dumping**

(Woodland, CA) – September 25, 2013 – Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig, together with 51 other California District Attorneys and two City Attorneys, announced today that San Joaquin County Superior Court Judge Linda L. Lofhtus has ordered Rite Aid Corporation to pay \$12,324,000 in settlement of a civil environmental prosecution. As a result of the settlement, Yolo County will receive over \$600,000. In Yolo County there are six Rite Aid Stores and a Northern California distribution center located in Woodland.

In September, 2013 a statewide prosecution team consisting of the Yolo County District Attorney and other California District Attorneys and City Attorneys filed a civil lawsuit claiming that more than 600 California Rite Aid stores unlawfully handled and disposed of hazardous wastes and materials over a seven-year period. Rite Aid mishandled hazardous products including pesticides, bleach, paint, aerosols, automotive products, solvents, pharmaceuticals, bio hazardous wastes, and other ignitable and corrosive materials.

The Yolo County District Attorney's Consumer Fraud and Environmental Protection Division handled the investigation and prosecution on behalf of Yolo County. Yolo County's Environmental Health Department also assisted with the investigation and preparation of the case. Additionally, Yolo County assisted in 30 of the 40 plus waste inspections statewide.

The case started in 2009 when environmental health agencies across the state began investigating issues with the handling of hazardous waste materials by California Rite Aid stores. Prosecutors from the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office along with deputy district attorneys and investigators from Yolo, San Diego, San Joaquin, and Riverside counties, along with environmental statewide regulators, conducted numerous inspections of hazardous waste at Rite Aid facilities and at landfills throughout California. Investigators found that Rite Aid was transporting hazardous waste and disposing it at landfills. The Yolo County District Attorney's conducted waste inspections at all the Yolo County Rite Aid stores and the distribution center and found violations of the hazardous waste control laws in all stores and the distribution center.

Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig emphasized the unique nature of these crimes. “Environmental crimes attack finite resources such as landfills and our water. There is only one landfill in Yolo County and we all share it,” said Reisig.

Reisig continued, “We are pleased to work with other prosecutorial agencies, environmental health departments, and law enforcement statewide to stop this illegal dumping of hazardous wastes. We stand together in protecting our communities and resources.”

As part of the monetary settlement, Rite Aid must fund several environmental projects that further consumer protection and environmental enforcement in California. The settlement also includes a permanent injunction prohibiting Rite Aid from committing future violations. Additionally, the California Hazardous Materials Investigators Association (CHMIA), of which Yolo County District Attorney Senior Enforcement Officer Heidi D’Agostino is Vice-President, will receive \$100,000 for training and education of statewide environmental investigators.

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