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Makers of 'Done' Brand Disinfectant Say The Product Is Authentic, But 'Raw Material Shortage' Led to Use of Can Labeled for Another Product

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The "Done" Branded labeling. DLCA has ordered all retail outlets to cease sales of the product immediately. By. DLCA

A Puerto Rico-based maker of the "Done" brand antibacterial spray said the controversial products seized by government authorities on St. Croix is, well, all a big mistake.

Jorge Gonzalez, president of Olein Recovery Corp., said the product removed from store shelves Wednesday was, indeed, antibacterial spray intended to help consumers prevent the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). The problem, he said, is that the company decided to affix the new antibacterial spray labels on cans that were originally intended for a different product.

A St. Croix woman became suspicious after buying a can of "Done" brand disinfectant. She peeled back the label and discovered permanent markings that identified the product as butane fuel.

Mr. Gonzalez sought to reassure consumers in a press release issued yesterday that the company's products are safe. Here is what he said:

"In the face of the global situation caused by COVID-19, we made operational adjustments to focus our production on disinfectant products, which are so necessary to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

"Due to the shortage of raw materials caused by the pandemic, we decided to use new cans that had been previously labeled for another product, but were never used. It is important to emphasize that these cans are new, sterile and had never been used. This determination was discussed with our distributors, who, understanding of the circumstances, agreed to it. "

Given the anxiety over the deadly coronavirus (COVID-19), regulators and consumers were not in an understanding mood. After receiving a tip about the dubious packaging, the V.I. Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs pulled the product from store shelves and assigned Consumer Affairs Director Miguel Tricoche to investigate. Meanwhile, the D.L.C.A. brought in the V.I. Department of Labor's Division of Occupational Safety and Health to check the product's material safety data sheet.

Commissioner Richard Evangelista of the D.L.C.A. said it was unacceptable if any company attempts to sell fake "high demand" items during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Gonzalez said consumers' safety and health "is our number one priority. Under no circumstances would we put the health of our people in danger."

According to company spokeswoman Claudia Ramirez-Chanza, Olein is in communications with D.L.C.A. and has submitted all the required documentation to clarify what occurred. "The company is now waiting for the D.L.C.A.'s indications on how to proceed," Ms. Ramirez-Chanza said.

"DLCA shall continue to investigate the "Done" branded antibacterial spray and provide the community with an update when it concludes its investigation," Mr. Evangelista said in written statement on Wednesday. "In the interim, DLCA encourages the community to continue to report consumer related actions and price gouging to DLCA. We are unable to be at all places at all times, so kindly assist us and report what you see or hear."

For consumer related issues, email the D.L.C.A. at consumerawareness@dlca.vi.gov or call the department's hotlines on St. Croix 340.727.SCAM(7226) or St.Thomas/St. John at 340.771.SCAM(7226). Complaints can be filed at www.dlca.vi.gov.