

May 17, 2019

Jonathan Passe Chief, ENERGY STAR Residential Branch U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW Washington, DC 20004

Re: Draft Documentation Regarding Potential Changes to Verification Oversight Organizations (VOOs) within the ENERGY STAR Residential New Construction Program Submitted via email to <u>energystarhomes@energystar.gov</u>

Dear Mr. Passe,

On behalf of more than 140,000 members, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) submits these comments to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the "Draft Documentation Regarding Potential Changes to Verification Oversight Organizations (VOOs) within the ENERGY STAR Residential New Construction Program" published March 2019.

NAHB is a Washington, D.C. based trade association that works to ensure housing is a national priority and that all Americans have access to safe, decent and affordable housing. The federation includes more than 700 affiliated state and local associations in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. NAHB's membership includes, among others, those who design, construct, and supply single family homes, build and manage multifamily projects, and remodel existing homes. Each year, NAHB's members construct about 80 percent of the new homes built in the United States.

On August 10, 2018, EPA solicited feedback from ENERGY STAR program stakeholders on whether the eligibility criteria for EPA recognition as a Verification Oversight Organization (VOO) for the ENERGY STAR New Construction program should be expanded to include organizations that earn and maintain accreditation through ISO/IEC 17065 "Conformity Assessment: Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes, and services," and also sought feedback on whether the EPA should consider incorporating additional or alternative requirements in the VOO 'Application for Recognition' to ensure the impartiality and avoidance of conflict-of-interest of VOOs. ¹NAHB responded with comments to both requests in a letter dated November 15, 2018.² The EPA is now inviting comments and feedback from ENERGY STAR program stakeholders on the draft documentation on the EPA Recognition of Verification Oversight Organizations (VOO), which is a revised set of proposed requirements that

¹ <u>https://www.energystar.gov/sites/default/files/asset/document/ISO%2017065%20RFI%2008%2009%2018.pdf</u>

² Letter from Jaclyn Toole, AVP, Sustainability & Green Building, National Association of Home Builders, *Request for Information: ISO/IEC 17065 Verification Oversight for the ENERGY STAR Certified Home Program* (Nov. 15, 2018) (on file with author).

May 17, 2019 Page 2

incorporates some prior stakeholder feedback and provides additional detailed information on proposed requirements.

Consistent with EPA's initial request for comments, NAHB assumes that EPA's goal in soliciting feedback from stakeholders is to collect input on the appropriateness of the proposed changes, the potential benefits and negative impacts, and to identify a timeline for implementation. Therefore, NAHB submits the following comments:

I. APPROPRIATNESS OF PROPOSED CHANGES

EPA Proposed Potential Changes to VOO Requirements:

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA for VERIFICATION OVERSIGHT ORGANIZATIONS

- 1. Demonstration of Impartial Governance Impartiality is of critical importance for Verification Oversight Organizations. As such, these organizations must be organized and operated to safeguard the objectivity of their activities and maintain policies to ensure that potential conflict of interest issues are identified and avoided. To be eligible for recognition as a VOO, an organization must maintain either:
 - 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) not-for-profit corporation status, with a Board of Directors or Executive Committee with a diverse representation of interests; and/or
 - ISO/IEC 17065 "Conformity Assessment: Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes, and services" accreditation to the ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol for Site-Built and Modular Single-Family Homes and Multifamily New Construction Using an Energy Rating Index-Based Compliance Path through a signatory to the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Multilateral Recognition Agreement (MLA).

NAHB Comments:

NAHB does not support the new proposed VOO eligibility criteria requiring either a prerequisite of a non-profit organization OR ISO/IEC 17065 accreditation. NAHB believes that compliance with ISO/IEC 17065 should be the only standard level of compliance for all entities seeking VOO status regardless of non-profit/for-profit nature of an organization. By requiring all entities to achieve VOO eligibility through compliance with ISO/IEC17065, the program levels the playing field for the industry. Holding all verifiers to the same quality control standard will provide more consistent ratings regardless of an organization's non-profit status. The ISO/IEC 17065 is primarily concerned with "conformity assessment" in certifications, to only apply this requirement to a portion of the VOOs is counter to the goals of the program. This change could also help to bring additional value and validity to the ENERGY STAR Residential Certified Home Program, knowing that no matter which organization conducts the work, the outcomes will be consistent.

Knowing that one size never fits most, NAHB supports providing options for builders. However, NAHB remains concerned that different levels of compliance could easily lead to inconsistent and unreliable results, ultimately increasing builder liability. The elimination of the non-profit eligibility criteria may allow more competition in the marketplace, enhance quality control through third-party verification, and further distinguish the role of the builder and the verifier. In this instance, NAHB feels that an organization's tax status has no impact on their ability to be ISO/IEC 17065 accredited and oversee these types of program requirements.

In a time where data quality, transparency and consistency are being questioned, it is imperative that changes be made to hold everyone accountable. Once new eligibility criteria are established, all current and future VOOs must be held to the same standard. If a VOO is able to comply with either one of the two currently proposed eligibility criteria, NAHB has significant concerns about the potential for a lack of competitive fees as well as inconsistency in prices between non-profit VOOs and those with the ISO/IEC 17065 accreditation, particularly because of the expenses associated with obtaining the latter. It is important that builders have competitive choices when it comes to these types of programs, so they can better meet the varying needs of their clients, their projects, and any other certifications they wish to pursue.

Therefore, NAHB urges EPA to eliminate the non-profit status eligibility criteria and only allow organizations that have the rigorous ISO/IEC 17065 accreditation to become VOOs. This requested change in eligibility criteria does not restrict any organization from applying, it only increases consistency, confidence in output quality and will streamline the application process with a single criterion.

II. POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND NEGATIVE IMPACTS

EPA Proposed Potential Changes to VOO Requirements:

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA for VERIFICATION OVERSIGHT ORGANIZATIONS

- 2. Demonstration of Impartial Governance
 - ISO/IEC 17065 "Conformity Assessment: Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes, and services" accreditation to the ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol for Site-Built and Modular Single-Family Homes and Multifamily New Construction Using an Energy Rating Index-Based Compliance Path through a signatory to the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Multilateral Recognition Agreement (MLA).

NAHB Comments:

NAHB questions the stability, application and availability of RESNET's Standard 301 Energy Rating Index (ERI). Initially the HERS standard was proprietary, but then shifted to an open ANSI standard in 2014 where it was first referenced in the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). Now, it appears that RESNET is attempting to limit the application of Standard 301 to once again be proprietary as demonstrated in the recently filed and still outstanding lawsuit against Triconic LLC³. The uncertainty that surrounds Standard 301 could potentially give RESNET an unfair advantage as a VOO if they are able to restrict the use of the standard.

While NAHB is not opposed to the incorporation by reference of specific standards, the standard must nonetheless be freely available and allowed to be freely used by the public. However, an important distinction exists between obtaining a standard and the application of that standard.

³ See Appendix A, Complaint, Residential Energy Services Network, Inc. v. Triconic, LLC, No. 6:19-cv-00327 (M.D. Fla. Feb. 18, 2019)

EPA Proposed Potential Changes to VOO Requirements: **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES for VERIFICATION OVERSIGHT ORGANIZATION**

- 3. VOO Responsibilities
 - b. Accredited Software
 - *i.* Establish and maintain policies requiring that only home energy modeling software programs that are tested and approved in accordance with the most current version of RESNET Publication 002 shall be used in ENERGY STAR certifications for homes and apartments.

NAHB Comments:

As written, NAHB has similar concerns with the requirements for the accredited software about the availability, use and application of RESNET Publication 002 as detailed in the previous comment addressing Standard 301. NAHB recommends that EPA obtain a release from RESNET for anyone to use Publication 002 and develop additional criteria to qualify third-party organizations to test and approve software to the most current version of RESNET Publication 002. These third-party organizations can include but should not be limited to VOOs.

EPA Proposed Potential Changes to VOO Requirements:

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES for VERIFICATION OVERSIGHT ORGANIZATION

- 4. Database of ENERGY STAR Certified Homes and Apartments
 - a. Maintain a database of homes and apartments that are certified as ENERGY STAR, and provide EPA with summary reports, as needed, to allow the Agency to track partners' participation in the ENERGY STAR program, as well as obtain general aggregate information about the energy-efficiency features being used in ENERGY STAR certified homes and apartments.

NAHB Comments:

NAHB encourages EPA to provide a more detailed database requirement for VOOs. The database should minimally include physical address, date, energy rating index, verifier name, company, contact information, version of ENERGY STAR, and software version used. These required data points will allow for uniformity across VOOs and enable EPA to easily compare all single-family ENERGY STAR new home certifications. This requirement has the potential to increase program visibility, and to provide more avenues for consistent data-sharing with organizations like the Multiple Listings Services (MLS).

III. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

EPA Proposed Potential Changes to VOO Requirements:

TERMS OF RECOGNITION FOR VERIFICATION OVERSIGHT ORGANIZATIONS Modifications

...Organizations previously recognized by EPA will be given at least 180 days to implement any policies or procedures needed to comply with new EPA requirements.

May 17, 2019 Page 5

NAHB Comments:

NAHB requests a more detailed timeline for implementation of the recognition of Verification Oversight Organizations (VOO).

IV. CONCLUSION

NAHB supports the availability of voluntary, above-code programs as a means to encourage energy-efficient construction practices. In fact, in a recent survey conducted by NAHB, 81% homebuyers ranked having an ENERGY STAR rating for the whole house as either highly desirable or an essential element for their next home.⁴ This information demonstrates that voluntary, above-code programs can penetrate the market place and create a demand, thus increasing their value. NAHB also supports enhancing consumer choices as well as market-based mechanisms to maintain or increase energy efficiency savings. To be effective, however, any program must send the right signals by creating efficient and effective solutions that not only reduce energy usage, but also promote uniform rigor, limit builder liability and yield less burdensome regulations in the future.

Overall, NAHB has significant concerns with the current draft of proposed changes to the ENERGY STAR Residential New Construction Program and believes that the additional clarity provided by this draft of VOO requirements does not reflect several main points NAHB raised in its November 2018 letter. NAHB values the opportunity to provide comments on the EPA's Draft Documentation Regarding Potential Changes to Verification Oversight Organizations (VOOs) within the ENERGY STAR Residential New Construction Program. In its current form, however, NAHB does not support this draft version and strongly urges the EPA revisit the eligibility criteria. Please contact me at (202)266-8225 or <u>itoole@nahb.org</u> if you have any questions regarding this letter or would like to discuss these comments in further detail.

Sincerely,

Jaclyn S. Toole, Assoc. AIA, CGP Assistant Vice President, Sustainability & Green Building

⁴ Emrath, Paul. "The Average Builder Uses 10 Different Green Products and Practices," *Eye on Housing* (blog). March 13, 2017 http://eyeonhousing.org/2017/03/the-average-builder-uses-10-different-green-products-and-practices/? ga=2.172538915.1055520192.1494427816-135545152.1476289408

APPENDIX A

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA ORLANDO DIVISION

RESIDENTIAL ENERGY SERVICES NETWORK, Inc., a California corporation,

Plaintiff,

ν.

Triconic, LLC, a foreign limited liability company,

Defendant.

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff, RESIDENTIAL ENERGY SERVICES NETWORK, Inc. ("RESNET"), a California corporation, hereby files this complaint against Defendant, TRICONIC, LLC ("Triconic"), a foreign limited liability company, and states:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

1. This is an action for false designation of origin and unfair competition under Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act (15 U.S.C. § 1125(a)); the United States Copyright Act of 1976, as amended (§ 17 U.S.C. §§ 101 *et seq.*); violations of the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act ("FDUTPA") (*Fla. Stat.* §§ 501.201 to 501.213); common law trademark infringement and unfair competition under Florida law pursuant to Fla. Stat. §495.161; and other Federal and causes of action under the laws of the State of Florida, for damages and injunctive relief.

THE PARTIES

2. RESNET is a California Corporation doing business in the State of Florida that owns the intellectual property at issue.

3. Triconic is a foreign limited liability company that is registered to do business in Florida, does business in this jurisdiction, and has infringed RESNET's intellectual property in this jurisdiction.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

4. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to, *inter alia*, 15 U.S.C. § 1121 and 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331, 1338 and 1367, in that this is a trademark dispute that arises under the federal Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1051 *et seq*.

5. Venue and jurisdiction is proper in that:

• Triconic operates, conducts, engages in, or carries on a business or business ventures in this State, and the Middle District of Florida, within the meaning of Fla. Stat. § 48.193(1);

• Triconic has committed tortious acts within this State, and the Middle District of Florida, including the infringement set forth herein, within the meaning of Fla. Stat. § 48.193(1); and/or

• Triconic is engaged in substantial and not isolated activity within this State, and the Middle District of Florida, within the meaning of Fla. Stat. § 48.193(2).

• Venue is proper in this judicial district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b) and (c) because a substantial part of the acts or omissions giving rise to this claim occurred, in this judicial district.

BACKGROUND

6. The Residential Energy Services Network ("RESNET") was founded in 1995 as an independent, non-profit organization to help homeowners reduce the cost of their utility bills by making their homes more energy efficient.

7. In 2002, RESNET became incorporated as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization and Energy Rated Homes of America was merged into the organization, with a Board of Directors governing RESNET.

8. After more than a decade of development, the infrastructure needed to make energy efficiency a standard feature in the nation's housing market is now in place. Across the nation, rating programs, in partnership with the housing industry, are forging the public and private partnerships required for successful home energy rating systems. The technical, program and marketing assistance required for this effort is provided by RESNET.

9. The Home Energy Rating System ("HERS") Index is the industry standard by which a home's energy efficiency is measured. It is also the nationally recognized system for inspecting and calculating a home's energy performance.

10. The HERS Index measures a home's energy efficiency and can calculate other outputs and suggestions, such as how efficiently a home is operating and which modifications can be made for greater energy savings. When selling a home, a low HERS Index Score can command a higher resale price; when purchasing a home, the HERS Index Score can be used to anticipate the costs of energy bills and weigh whether efficiency upgrades are needed.

11. On December 6, 2004, RESNET filed for a trademark on "RESNET RESIDENTIAL ENERGY SERVICES NETWORK," Reg. No. 3170404, Serial No. 76623423.

12. On January 3, 2007, RESNET filed for a trademark on "HERS," Reg. No. 3322697, Serial No. 77075107.

13. On November 30, 2017, RESNET filed for a trademark for "RESNET HERS H20," Serial No. 87703439.

14. On May 3, 2018, RESNET obtained a copyright registration, Reg. No. TX0008577199, for the "Standard for the Calculation and Labeling of the Energy Performance of Low-Rise Residential Buildings using an Energy Rating Index." RESNET's trademarks and copyright are collectively referred to as its "Intellectual Property."

15. Based upon Triconic's website, Triconic claims that its mission is to be one of the world's leading producers and providers of certification programs and information. *About*, TRICONIC, LLC (last accessed: Feb. 11, 2019) <https://triconic.com/about>.

Mission

Triconic's mission is to be one of the world's leading producers and providers of certification programs and information. By using creativity and innovation to distinguish our portfolio of certification programs, services, and products, we aim to develop the most trusted and profitable certification programs while bringing the best user experiences to all markets we serve. Our team values integrity, openness, and mutual respect, takes on challenges and promises to hold ourselves accountable to customers, shareholders, partners, and employees by honoring our commitments, providing results, and striving for the highest quality.

16. Triconic claims to have a unique process for creating certification programs where it offers a tailored approach for each of its certification program sponsors. *Our Process*, TRICONIC, LLC (last accessed: Feb. 11, 2019) https://triconic.com/our-process.

Our Process

Triconic has a unique process for creating certification programs. We offer a completely tailored approach for each of our certification program sponsors.

17. On January 28, 2018 at the National Association of Home Builders Green and Energy Subcommittee Meeting, Triconic and the Florida Home Builders Association ("FHBA") announced the launching of its Certified Ratings Program.

18. At the January 28, 2018 Meeting, it was announced that the FHBA outsourced the daily operations of their rating program to Triconic. At the presentation Triconic's President & Chief Executive Officer, Darrell Lehman, announced that the FHBA will receive a portion of the proceeds of the ratings conducted through the Certified Ratings Program, providing a financial stake in the program.

19. Mr. Lehman also directed people to Triconic's webpage on the Certified Ratings Program. *See FHBA Certified Ratings Program*, TRICONIC, LLC (last accessed: Feb. 11, 2019) <https://triconic.com/fhba-certified-ratings-program>.

20. At some point after the announcement, Triconic arranged that Wrightsoft Corporation's Right-Energy® software program would be used to calculate energy rating scores for the program. At that time Wrightsoft Corporation's Right-Energy® was accredited by RESNET as a HERS software program.

21. On September 26, 2018, RESNET revoked Wrightsoft Corporation's Right-Energy® accreditation as HERS Rating Provider.

22. December 14, 2018 RESNET notified HERS Raters and HERS accredited Rating Providers that Right-Energy's accreditation as HERS Rating Software Program Provider was revoked. A copy of the communication "Revocation of the Accreditation of Wrightsoft Corporation's Right-Energy" is attached as Exhibit "A."

23. On December 14, 2018, Triconic deceptively sent communications to certified RESNET HERS Raters that "Wrightsoft Corporation's Right-Energy®, as an ERI/HERS Rating

Case 6:19-cv-00327-PGB-DCI Document 1 Filed 02/18/19 Page 6 of 19 PageID 6

Software Tool, remains approved for use in the Certified Ratings Program." A copy of the Triconic notification is attached "Triconic Notification that Right-Energy® Approved" (RESNET staff was forwarded this communication from three different HERS Raters from Florida, Nevada and North Carolina) as Exhibit "B."

24. Using RESNET'S trademarks, Triconic sent this communication to certified RESNET HERS Raters within three hours after RESNET's communication.

25. The communication links to the FHBA website, which states, "The Certified Ratings Program, sponsored by the Florida Home Builders Association (FHBA), provides certified energy ratings certificates for new single-family homes, energy rating certificates for homes that are already built." *Certified Ratings*, FLORIDA HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION (FHBA) (last accessed: Feb. 11, 2019) http://fhba.com/resources/certified-ratings/>.

26. The FHBA Certified Rankings website in turn states: "You will be directed to our Program Administrator, Triconic, who can help your HBA launch a Program in your area," with a link to the Triconic webpage. *Id*.

27. The FHBA site is also linked to Triconic's webpage. *FAQs*, TRICONIC, LLC (last accessed: Feb. 11, 2019), ">https://triconic.com/faqs>.

28. On December 16, 2018, FHBA posted that "… Wrightsoft Corporation's Right-Energy®, as an ERI/HERS rating software, remains approved for use in the Certified Ratings Program. Any policy decision by RESNET does not change Right-Energy® as an approved software tool to produce ERI/HERS values as needed by codes, standards and the Certified Rating Program. Triconic also posted a copy of the post, "Florida State Homebuilders Communication on Right Energy 12-16-18," which is attached hereto as Exhibit "C."

29. Triconic is using RESNET's copyrighted material and trademarks to deceptively and unfairly compete with RESNET throughout the country, including Florida, and to confuse the public.

30. Triconic is tarnishing the Intellectual Property and the RESNET brand.

31. Triconic's communications to certified RESNET HERS Raters without RESNET's permission, is a misappropriation and infringement of RESNET's Intellectual Property and damages RESNET and the RESNET brand.

32. Triconic has misappropriated RESNET's Intellectual Property to the detriment of the RESNET and the benefit of the Triconic.

 RESNET never licensed, or gave exclusive permission, to Triconic to use any of RESNET's Intellectual Property.

34. Triconic's continued use of RESNET's Intellectual Property is: (a) damaging RESNET's Intellectual Property; (b) damaging the RESNET brand; and (c) causing confusion in the marketplace.

35. Triconic does not a have license, authority, or other permission from RESNET to use any of RESNET's copyrighted material.

36. The forgoing acts of Triconic constitutes direct copyright infringement in violation of federal law.

37. The foregoing acts of Triconic are intended to cause, have caused, and are likely to continue to cause confusion or mistake, or to deceive consumers, the public, and the trade into believing that its Certified Ratings Program is authentic, authorized, or equivalent to RESNET's program and HERS index.

38. RESNET enters into binding provider agreements with its authorized providers who adhere to the requirements for accreditation and quality assurance as established by RESNET.

RESNET has contracts with providers throughout the United States, which includes
 Florida.

40. Triconic was aware, or should have been aware, that RESNET has binding provider agreements or prior business relationships with these providers, which is why, on information and belief, Triconic intentionally sought to send the correspondence to certified RESNET HERS Raters.

41. Triconic specifically intended to interfere with Plaintiff's business relationships with its providers.

42. The activities of Triconic, as described above, are likely to create a false impression and deceive consumers, the public, and the trade into believing that there is a connection or association between Triconic and RESNET.

<u>COUNT I</u> FEDERAL TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT/FALSE DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN UNDER 15 U.S.C. §1125(a)

43. RESNET incorporates the allegations of the Paragraphs 1 through 42 as if fully set forth herein.

44. By *inter alia*, circulating materials that falsely state Wrightsoft Corporation's Right-Energy® software remains accredited by RESNET and directing certified RESNET HERS Raters to Triconic's advertisements under this pretext, Triconic has falsely designated and represented that the accreditation of Right-Energy® by RESNET still exists and that Triconic's correspondences are endorsed by, connected with, authorized by, or otherwise associated with RESNET, who owns federal registrations for its Intellectual Property.

Case 6:19-cv-00327-PGB-DCI Document 1 Filed 02/18/19 Page 9 of 19 PageID 9

45. Triconic has used and continues to use RESNET's Intellectual Property throughout the United States, including the Middle District of Florida.

46. Triconic has improperly used, and continues to use, RESNET trademarks and copyright in connection with the same services, which is likely to cause confusion or mistake, or to deceive as to affiliation, connection, or association of Triconic with RESNET, or as to the origin, sponsorship, or approval of their goods and/or services.

47. Triconic's acts have damaged or are likely to damage goodwill associated with RESNET, the Intellectual Property, and the RESNET brand.

48. Triconic's acts have been willful, intentional, and intended to benefit Triconic at RESNET's expense.

49. Triconic's actions violate Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a).

50. Triconic's actions have directly and proximately caused, and will continue to cause, irreparable harm to RESNET, unless preliminarily and permanently enjoined.

51. RESNET does not have an adequate remedy at law.

52. Furthermore, Triconic is realizing profit and will continue to realize a profit from its unlawful actions, which are causing, and will cause, RESNET monetary damage in an amount to be determined at trial.

WHEREFORE, RESNET prays that the Court grant the Prayer for Relief set forth below.

<u>COUNT II</u> FEDERAL UNFAIR COMPETITION - 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a)

53. RESNET incorporate the allegations of the Paragraphs 1 through 42 as if fully set forth herein.

54. RESNET has not authorized Triconic to use RESNET's Intellectual Property, ideas, programs, or customers in any manner.

Case 6:19-cv-00327-PGB-DCI Document 1 Filed 02/18/19 Page 10 of 19 PageID 10

55. Triconic willfully, intentionally, and deliberately stole RESNET's ideas, programs, customers and Intellectual Property in derogation of RESNET's rights.

56. Triconic's use of RESNET's intellectual property, including trademark, copyrights, programs and concepts in commerce is likely to cause confusion, mistake, or to deceive as to the affiliation, connection, or association; and/or likely to cause confusion, mistake, or to deceive as to the origin, sponsorship, or approval of the Triconic's services and affiliations, and thus, constitutes unfair competition, false designation of origin, and/or false description or representation in violation of § 43(a) of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. §1125(a).

57. Triconic's actions have directly and proximately caused, and will continue to cause, irreparable harm to RESNET, unless preliminarily and permanently enjoined.

58. RESNET does not have adequate remedy at law.

59. Furthermore, Triconic is realizing profit and will continue to realize a profit from its unlawful actions, which are causing, and will cause, RESNET monetary damage in an amount to be determined at trial.

WHEREFORE, RESNET prays that the Court grant the Prayer for Relief set forth below.

COUNT III VIOLATION OF FLORIDA DECEPTIVE AND UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES ACT - FLA. STAT. § 501.201 et. seq.

60. RESNET re-alleges and re-incorporates the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 42 as though fully set forth herein.

61. RESNET has not authorized Triconic to use RESNET's Intellectual Property, ideas, programs, or customers in any manner.

62. Triconic's involvement in the fraudulent scheme to steal the RESNET's rights, title, and interest in its Intellectual Property, customers, good will and business reputation, as well as its

Case 6:19-cv-00327-PGB-DCI Document 1 Filed 02/18/19 Page 11 of 19 PageID 11

unlawful and unauthorized use of the RESNET's Intellectual Property, constitutes unfair methods of competition, unconscionable acts and practices, and unfair and deceptive acts and practices in the conduct of any trade or commerce violative of *Fla. Stat.* § 501.204(1).

63. Triconic's fraudulent misrepresentation, omission, and concealment of their involvement in the fraudulent scheme constitutes unfair methods of competition, unconscionable acts and practices, and unfair and deceptive acts and practices in the conduct of any trade or commerce violative of *Fla. Stat.* § 501.204(1).

64. The conduct described above offends established public policy and is immoral, unethical, oppressive, unscrupulous and substantially injurious.

65. Triconic's actions have directly and proximately caused, and will continue to cause, RESNET to, and continues to, suffer damages, including but not limited to economic losses, damages to goodwill, and attorneys' fees in connection with this litigation.

WHEREFORE, RESNET prays that the Court grant the Prayer for Relief set forth below.

<u>COUNT IV</u> UNFAIR COMPETITION UNDER FLORIDA LAW

66. RESNET re-alleges and re-incorporates the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 42 as though fully set forth herein.

67. RESNET has used and continue to use Intellectual Property in interstate commerce.

68. Triconic's actions have been willful, deliberate, and intended to benefit Triconic at RESNET's expense.

69. Triconic's use of RESNET's Intellectual Property in commerce is likely to cause confusion, mistake, or to deceive as to the affiliation, connection, or association; and/or likely to cause confusion, mistake, or to deceive as to the origin, sponsorship, or approval of Triconic's

services, and thus, constitute unfair competition, false designation of origin, and/or false description or representation.

70. Triconic's actions have directly and proximately caused, and will continue to cause, irreparable harm to RESNET, unless preliminarily and permanently enjoined.

71. RESNET has no adequate remedy at law.

72. Furthermore, Triconic is realizing profit and will continue to realize a profit from its unlawful actions, which are causing, and will cause, RESNET monetary damage in an amount to be determined at trial.

WHEREFORE, RESNET prays that the Court grant the Prayer for Relief set forth below.

<u>COUNT V</u> DIRECT COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

73. RESNET repeats and re-alleges the allegations of paragraphs 1 through 42 as though fully set forth herein.

74. RESNET is the sole owner of the copyright for the "Standard for the Calculation and Labeling of the Energy Performance of Low-Rise Residential Buildings using an Energy Rating Index." Reg. No. TX0008577199.

75. Triconic intentionally infringed RESNET's copyright by duplicating, using, advertising the Certified Ratings Program which uses RESNET's copyrighted "Standard for the Calculation and Labeling of the Energy Performance of Low-Rise Residential Buildings using an Energy Rating Index."

76. Triconic's infringement was undertaken knowingly, and with the intent to financially gain from RESNET's protected copyright.

77. Triconic's actions have directly and proximately caused, and will continue to cause, irreparable harm to RESNET, unless preliminarily and permanently enjoined.

78. **RESNET** has no adequate remedy at law.

79. Furthermore, Triconic is realizing profit and will continue to realize a profit from its unlawful actions, which are causing, and will cause, RESNET monetary damage in an amount to be determined at trial.

COUNT VI CONTRIBUTORY COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

80. RESNET repeats and re-alleges the allegations of paragraphs 1 through 42 as though fully set forth herein.

81. Triconic intentionally infringed RESNET's copyright by duplicating, using, and advertising its Certified Ratings Program, which purports to be identical to, or substantially similar to RESNET's copyrighted "Standard for the Calculation and Labeling of the Energy Performance of Low-Rise Residential Buildings using an Energy Rating Index."

82. Triconic contributed to Wrightsoft and FHBA engaging in the illegal and infringing activity described herein, and, with knowledge of such activities, deliberately or recklessly willfully blinded itself to this illegal conduct, deciding instead to profit from the revenues it produced.

83. Triconic also had and continues to have a direct financial interest in, and the right and ability to supervise and control the infringing activities of Wrightsoft and FHBA.

84. Triconic's actions have directly and proximately caused, and will continue to cause, irreparable harm to RESNET, unless preliminarily and permanently enjoined.

85. **RESNET** has no adequate remedy at law.

86. Furthermore, Triconic is realizing profit and will continue to realize a profit from its unlawful actions, which are causing, and will cause, RESNET monetary damage in an amount to be determined at trial.

<u>COUNT VII</u> Federal Trademark Infringement, 15 U.S.C. § 1114

87. RESNET realleges and incorporates the foregoing paragraphs 1 through 42, as though fully set forth herein.

88. Triconic's use of RESNET's trademarks is likely to cause confusion, or to cause mistake, or to deceive as to the source, origin, or affiliation, connection, or association of Triconic's products and services with RESNET's, or as to the approval of Triconic's products or services by RESNET and thus constitutes infringement of RESNET's federally registered marks, in violation of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1114.

89. Triconic's actions have been willful, deliberate, and intended to benefit Triconic at RESNET's expense.

90. Triconic's actions constitute trademark infringement in violation of Section 32 of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1114.

91. Triconic's actions have directly and proximately caused, and will continue to cause, irreparable harm to RESNET, unless preliminarily and permanently enjoined.

92. RESNET has no adequate remedy at law.

93. Furthermore, Triconic is realizing profit and will continue to realize a profit from its unlawful actions, which are causing, and will cause, RESNET monetary damage in an amount to be determined at trial.

<u>COUNT VII</u> <u>TORTIOUS INTERFERENCE WITH BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS</u>

94. RESNET realleges and incorporates the foregoing paragraphs 1 through 42, as though fully set forth herein.

95. RESNET has beneficial and ongoing relationships with its authorized providers who adhere to the requirements for accreditation and quality assurance as established by RESNET.

96. As set forth above, Triconic intentionally, maliciously, unlawfully and without justification interfered with these contractual and advantageous business relationships between RESNET and its providers by intentionally sending misleading correspondence to RESNET's providers.

97. Triconic was aware, or should have been aware, that RESNET has binding provider agreements or prior business relationships with these providers, which is why, on information and belief, Triconic intentionally sought to send the correspondence to certified RESNET HERS Raters.

98. Triconic specifically intended to interfere with Plaintiff's business relationships with its providers.

99. The activities of Triconic, as described above, are likely to create a false impression and deceive consumers, the public, and the trade into believing that there is a connection or association between Triconic and RESNET.

100. Triconic's actions may reasonably induce or cause providers to not continue to conduct business with RESNET.

101. RESNET has been damaged as a result of Triconic's interference with its providers.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, RESNET prays that this Court enter judgment in RESNET's favor on the claims set forth above and award RESNET the following relief:

a. That this Court adjudge that RESNET's Intellectual Property has been infringed, as a direct and proximate result of the willful acts of Triconic as set forth in this Complaint, including

Case 6:19-cv-00327-PGB-DCI Document 1 Filed 02/18/19 Page 16 of 19 PageID 16

Triconic's use of RESNET's trademarks and copyright, in violation of RESNET's rights under federal and state law.

b. That this Court adjudge that Triconic has competed unfairly with RESNET in violation of RESNET's rights under federal and state law.

c. That this Court adjudge that Triconic has committed acts in violation of the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act.

d. For damages in an amount to be proven at trial for trademark infringement under Section 32 of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1114;

e. An injunction against the Triconic, and all officers, directors, agents, servants, employees, attorneys, successors, and assigns, and all persons in active concert or participation therewith, finding that they be preliminarily and permanently enjoined and restrained:

- 1) From using the RESNET's Intellectual Property, customer lists, programs or any reproduction, infringement, copy or colorable imitation and any formative variations or phonetic equivalents thereof, or any term, name or mark which incorporates any of the foregoing, or any trademarks similar thereto or likely to be confused therewith, in connection with the distribution, marketing, advertising or sale of any unauthorized goods and/or services;
- From using any logo, trade name, or trademark which may be calculated to falsely represent or which has the effect of falsely representing that the unauthorized goods and/or

services of Triconic are sponsored by, authorized by, or in any way associated with RESNET;

- From infringing, contributing to, conspiring to, or inducing the infringement of the RESNET's Intellectual Property;
- From doing any other act or thing likely to cause the public or the trade to believe that there is any connection between Triconic and RESNET, or their respective goods, programs or services; and
- 5) From falsely representing themselves or their affiliates as being connected with RESNET, or sponsored by or associated with RESNET, or engaging in any act which is likely to falsely cause the trade and/or members of the purchasing public to believe that Triconic or its affiliates are associated with RESNET and/or that RESNET are associated with Triconic, and that Triconic be prohibited from any and all use of RESNET's Intellectual Property; and
- Invalidating and/or nullifying any contracts that Triconic may have signed or disseminated to third parties utilizing the RESNET's Intellectual Property; and
- Preventing and prohibiting the Triconic from utilizing the "RESNET" or "HERS" marks, or any derivative thereof.

e. That Triconic be required to recall and deliver up for destruction all goods, labels, signs, prints, packages, wrappers, inventory, advertisements, internet advertising and other written or printed material in the possession or control of Triconic, or third party advertisers, that

bear any of RESNET's Intellectual Property or any infringement thereof, and any formative variations or phonetic equivalents thereof, or any term, name or mark which incorporates any of the foregoing, or any trademarks similar thereto or likely to be confused therewith, alone or in combination with any other word or element.

f. That Triconic be directed to file with this Court and to serve upon RESNET within thirty (30) days after service of the injunction issued in this action, a written report under oath, setting forth in detail the manner of compliance with paragraphs (d) and (e), including all subparts.

g. That RESNET recover Triconic's profits and the damages incurred by RESNET, including without limitation damages sufficient for corrective advertising, arising from Triconic's acts of trademark infringement and unfair competition, and that the Court, pursuant to § 35 of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1117, enter judgment, and that said sums be trebled as authorized pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1117(b).

h. That RESNET be entitled to injunctive relief as set forth in § 34 of the Lanham Act, and that RESNET has and recover the remedies set forth in §§ 35(a) and 36 of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1117(a) and 1118.

i. That this case be deemed "exceptional" within the meaning of 15 U.S.C. § 1117, and that RESNET be awarded its reasonable attorneys' fees incurred in this action, pursuant to § 35 of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. §1117.

j. That RESNET be awarded its reasonable attorneys' fees and costs as set forth in Fla. Stat. § 501.2105.

k. That RESNET recover its taxable costs and disbursements herein, pursuant to §35 of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1117, Fed. R. Civ. P. 54, and/or Fla. Stat. § 57.041, and/or as otherwise authorized.

1. That Triconic be directed to pay over to RESNET pre-judgment interest from the date

the infringement began and post-judgment interest at the maximum rate permitted by law.

m. That RESNET recover such further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

JURY DEMAND

RESNET demands a trial by jury as to all issues triable of right by a jury.

Respectfully submitted this 18th day of February, 2019.

NELSON MULLINS BROAD AND CASSEL

Attorneys for RESNET, 390 North Orange Avenue, Suite 1400 Orlando, Florida 32801 P.O. Box 4961 (32802-4961) Telephone: (407) 839-4200 Facsimile: (407) 650-0927

By:/s/ Nicolette C. Vilmos Nicolette C. Vilmos Florida Bar #: 0469051 nicolette.vilmos@nelsonmullins.com *From:* Laurel Elam <<u>laurel@resnet.us</u>> *Sent:* Friday, December 14, 2018 11:38 AM *To:* undisclosed-recipients: *Subject:* Revocation of the Accreditation of Wrightsoft Corporation's Right-Energy HERS, as a HERS Rating Software Tool

To: Accredited Rating Providers, Rater Training and HERS Software Providers and Certified HERS® Raters

As required by Section 911.4.4 of the Mortgage Industry National Home Energy Rating Standards, RESNET® is providing this notification that the RESNET HERS Rating Software Tool Provider Accreditation of Wrightsoft Corporation has been revoked. Accordingly, Wrightsoft's Right-Energy HERS is no longer a RESNET Accredited HERS Software Tool.

The decision to suspend Wrightsoft's accreditation is based on the commission of a serious violation of RESNET's standards and procedures, which resulted in Wrightsoft gaining unauthorized access to data in the RESNET National Registry. Upon discovery, RESNET blocked Wrightsoft's access, took additional precautions, and initiated an investigation.

From: Triconic LLC <<u>info@triconic.com</u>> Date: December 14, 2018 at 4:49:20 PM EST To: <u>pgillis@thehomeaudit.com</u> Subject: Right-Energy® Approved Reply-To: <u>info@triconic.com</u>



Inspectors,

We thought you should know that <u>Wrightsoft Corporation's Right-Energy®</u>, as an ERI/HERS Rating Software Tool, remains approved for use in the <u>Certified Ratings Program</u>. Any recent policy decision by RESNET does not change Right-Energy® as an approved software tool to produce ERI/HERS values as needed by codes, standards, and the Certified Ratings Program.

If you would like more information on Wrightsoft Corporation's Right-Energy[®], please <u>click</u> <u>here</u>. For more information on the Certified Ratings Program, please visit FHBA's website by <u>clicking here</u>.

Learn More

Triconic LLC | (833) 237-8397 | info@triconic.com | www.triconic.com

Connect with us



	t	FLORIDA HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION				
		-		N 26		
FHBA	Membership	Advocacy	Education	News & Events	Publicatio	



RESNET recently took action against Right-Energy®. As a contractor, the question is can you continue to use Right-Energy® software? In Florida, the Building Commission approves software used to produce an energy rating index, ERI (also known as the old HERS rating) not RESNET. While RESNET may approve software for its use, the FHBA Certified Ratings Program and other providers rely on the Florida Building Commission's approval of ERI software.

Therefore, Wrightsoft Corporation's Right-Energy®, as an ERI/HERS rating software, remains approved for use in the Certified Ratings Program. Any recent policy decision by RESNET does not change Right-Energy® as an approved software tool to produce ERI/HERS values as needed by codes, standards, and the Certified Ratings Program.

The following links to software currently approved by the Commission: http://www.myfloridalicense.com/DBPR/building-codes-and-standards/energy/

BY FLORIDA HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION (FHBA) IN FHBA NEWS

December 16, 2018 🗐 0 📿

JS 44 (Rev. 02/19)

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS				DEFENDANTS				
RESIDENTIAL ENERGY SERVICES NETWORK, INC.				TRICONIC, LLC				
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff California				County of Residence of First Listed Defendantforeign limited liability com				
(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)				NOTE: IN LAND CO THE TRACT		<i>LAINTIFF CASES (</i> ON CASES, USE T VOLVED,	ONLY) HE LOCATION OF	
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, A	ddress, and Telephone Number		Attorneys (If Known)					
Nicolette C. Vilmos, Esq. 390 N. Orange Ave., Ste.			0					
II. BASIS OF JURISDI	CTION (Place an "X" in O	ne Box Only)	III. CI	TIZENSHIP OF P	RINCIPA	L PARTIES	(Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff	
U.S. Government Plaintiff	★ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government N	lot a Party)			TF DEF	Incorporated <i>or</i> P of Business In		
2 U.S. Government Defendant	4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenshi)	p of Parties in Item III)	Citize	en of Another State	2 0 2	Incorporated and of Business In		
				en or Subject of a	3 🗆 3	Foreign Nation		
IV. NATURE OF SUIT) (Place an "X" in One Box On	ly)					of Suit Code Descriptions.	
CONTRACT		RTS		ORFEITURE/PENALTY	1	KRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES	
 110 Insurance 120 Marine 130 Miller Act 140 Negotiable Instrument 	PERSONAL INJURY	 PERSONAL INJUR 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability 367 Health Care/ 		25 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 90 Other	□ 423 With	al 28 USC 158 drawal ISC 157	 375 False Claims Act 376 Qui Tam (31 USC 3729(a)) 400 State Reapportionment 	
Iso Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment	□ 320 Assault, Libel & Slander	Pharmaceutical Personal Injury			PROPEI □ 820 Copy	RTY RIGHTS	□ 410 Antitrust □ 430 Banks and Banking	
 151 Medicare Act 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans 	□ 330 Federal Employers' Product Liability Liability □ 368 Asbestos Personal □ 340 Marine Injury Product		ı		 830 Patent 835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application 		☐ 450 Commerce ☐ 460 Deportation ☐ 470 Racketeer Influenced and	
(Excludes Veterans) □ 153 Recovery of Overpayment	☐ 345 Marine Product Liability	Liability PERSONAL PROPE		LABOR	🕇 840 Trad	emark SECURITY	Corrupt Organizations	
of Veteran's Benefits	350 Motor Vehicle	370 Other Fraud	0 71	10 Fair Labor Standards	🗆 861 HIA	(1395ff)	485 Telephone Consumer	
 160 Stockholders' Suits 190 Other Contract 	355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability	 371 Truth in Lending 380 Other Personal 		Act 20 Labor/Management	🗖 863 DIW	k Lung (923) C/DIWW (405(g))	Protection Act 490 Cable/Sat TV	
 195 Contract Product Liability 196 Franchise 	360 Other Personal Injury	Property Damage 385 Property Damage		Relations 40 Railway Labor Act	□ 864 SSID □ 865 RSI (850 Securities/Commodities/ Exchange	
L) 190 Thatomac	362 Personal Injury -	Product Liability		51 Family and Medical			 890 Other Statutory Actions 891 Agricultural Acts 	
REAL PROPERTY	Medical Malpractice CIVIL RIGHTS	PRISONER PETITIO	NS 0 79	Leave Act 90 Other Labor Litigation	FEDER	AL TAX SUITS	□ 893 Environmental Matters	
 210 Land Condemnation 220 Foreclosure 	 440 Other Civil Rights 441 Voting 	Habeas Corpus:	0 79	91 Employee Retirement Income Security Act		s (U.S. Plaintiff efendant)	895 Freedom of Information Act	
 220 Poreclosure 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment 	441 Voting 442 Employment	□ 510 Motions to Vacat	e	Income Security Act		-Third Party	896 Arbitration	
 240 Torts to Land 245 Tort Product Liability 	443 Housing/ Accommodations	Sentence 530 General			26 U	JSC 7609	899 Administrative Procedure Act/Review or Appeal of	
290 All Other Real Property	□ 445 Amer. w/Disabilities -	535 Death Penalty		IMMIGRATION			Agency Decision	
	Employment 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other 448 Education	Other: 540 Mandamus & Oth 550 Civil Rights 555 Prison Condition 560 Civil Detainee - Conditions of	her 🗆 46	62 Naturalization Application 65 Other Immigration Actions	1		950 Constitutionality of State Statutes	
		Confinement	<u> </u>					
		Remanded from Appellate Court	□ 4 Reir Reo		er District	6 Multidis Litigatio Transfer	n - Litigation -	
(Cite the U.S. Civil Sta	atute under which you a	are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional sta				
VI. CAUSE OF ACTION	DN 15 U.S.C. 1051 Brief description of ca Trademark dispu	ause: te						
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:		IS A CLASS ACTIO	N D	DEMAND \$		CHECK YES onl URY DEMANI	y if demanded in complaint: D: ☑ Yes □No	
VIII. RELATED CASI IF ANY	E(S) (See instructions):	JUDGE		1	DOCKI	ET NUMBER _		
DATE 02/18/2019 FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		SIGNATURE OF AT	TORNEY	OF RECORD . VUMD				
				HIDOP		MAG, JU	IDGE	
RECEIPT # Al	MOUNT	APPLYING IFP		JUDGE _				

AO 440 (Rev. 06/12) Summons in a Civil Action

United	STATES DISTRICT COURT
	District of
Plaintiff(s) V. Defendant(s)))))))) Civil Action No.))))
Defendant(s))

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: (Defendant's name and address)

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are:

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date:

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk