

PLIBenefit from PLI's experience
10% off the Patent Office Exam Course[Register Now](#)

EnvTech Secures Major Dual Victory: Unanimous \$3M Trade Secret Judgment and Landmark Federal RICO Reversal

IPWATCHDOG

JUNE 26, 2026, 08:34 AM



Houston, TX: In a rare and definitive dual victory spanning state and federal jurisdictions, EnvTech, Inc. has successfully secured a multimillion-dollar state court judgment and a pioneering federal appellate court victory against competitor USA DeBusk, LLC (USAD) and its founder and CEO for the systematic theft of EnvTech's intellectual property. EnvTech is principally represented by William Cohan of Carlsbad, CA-based Cohan & Cohan, and Robert M. Millimet of Dallas, TX-based Richards Law PLLC.



Our website uses cookies to provide you with a better experience. Read our [privacy_policy](#) for more

Unanimous State Court Jury Verdict and Permanent Injunction

On June 11, 2026, the Honorable Michael Gomez of the 129th Judicial District Court of Harris County, Texas, entered a final judgment awarding EnvTech damages, punitive damages, attorneys' fees, costs, and prejudgment interest totaling approximately \$3 million.

The judgment follows a seven-day trial where a 12-person jury found by clear and convincing evidence that USAD willfully and maliciously misappropriated EnvTech's trade secret chemical formula. EnvTech uses its proprietary chemical formula globally to clean hydrofluoric alkylation ("HF alky") units in oil refineries safely and efficiently.

In addition to the monetary award, Judge Gomez issued a permanent injunction legally blocking USAD from using or disclosing EnvTech's trade secret chemical formula in any future refinery cleanings, or marketing, or research and development efforts. Full details are available in the attached file-stamped Final Judgment.

Precedent-Setting Federal Court RICO Decision

After investigating EnvTech's trade secret misappropriation claim for the state court case, Messrs. Millimet and Cohan filed a federal lawsuit under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act against USAD's founder and CEO, Patrick Andrew DeBusk, in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas. The suit alleges that the theft of EnvTech's trade secret was part of a pattern of intentionally poaching competitors' key personnel to steal those competitors' valuable confidential information.

Following an initial dismissal by the district court, EnvTech appealed. On June 9, 2026, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit issued a landmark decision fully reinstating the RICO lawsuit. Circuit Judge Dana M. Douglas, writing for the unanimous panel, determined that EnvTech adequately pled that Mr. DeBusk engaged in an open-ended pattern of racketeering activity based on USAD's multiple and related trade secret thefts.

The issues before the Fifth Circuit were whether: (1) EnvTech sufficiently alleged that DeBusk personally committed or conspired to commit trade secret theft under 18 U.S.C. § 1832(a) with criminal intent; and (2) EnvTech sufficiently alleged a "pattern of racketeering activity" under RICO (18 U.S.C. § 1962(c)) based on multiple trade secret thefts.

Our website uses cookies to provide you with a better experience. Read our [privacy_policy](#) for more

competitors' key employees, including the knowledge that could use EnvTech's technology. The

court rejected DeBusk's claims that he merely encouraged growth while underlings stole trade secrets without his approval: "...even if we accepted that the facts EnvTech alleges were equally explainable on two different theories, DeBusk cites no authority for the proposition that a tie must go to the defendant."

EnvTech's First Amended Complaint incorporated specific facts from four other trade secret lawsuits against USAD by competitors, which were "specific enough to plead additional RICO predicate acts," adding "to require more would be to require EnvTech to plead facts it cannot realistically know without discovery."

The Fifth Circuit held that the RICO open-ended continuity pattern was shown by (1) the alleged modus operandi with multiple victims, soliciting competitors' key employees to obtain and use stolen trade secrets; (2) DeBusk's failure to punish the employees whose thefts generated litigation; and (3) DeBusk's continued use of stolen trade secrets even after EnvTech's state court lawsuit was filed. The court quoted DeBusk's deposition testimony that he "never thought about trade secrets" but focused on "execution of hiring people" as a false exculpatory statement constituting evidence of criminal intent.

This federal ruling represents a major milestone in trade secret jurisprudence by enforcing the 2016 RICO Act amendment, adding trade secret theft to the list of RICO predicate crimes. The full Fifth Circuit Opinion is attached.

The federal case now returns to the district court for discovery and trial.



IPWATCHDOG

Warning & Disclaimer: The pages, articles and comments on IPWatchdog.com do not constitute legal advice, nor do they create any attorney-client relationship. The articles published express the personal opinion and views of the author as of the time of publication and should not be attributed to the author's employer, clients or the sponsors of IPWatchdog.com.

Our website uses cookies to provide you with a better experience. Read our [privacy_policy](#) for more



At IPWatchdog.com our focus is on the business, policy and substance of patents and other forms of intellectual property. Today IPWatchdog is recognized as the leading sources for news and information in the patent and innovation industries.

© 1999 – 2026 IPWatchdog, Inc.

[Terms & Conditions of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

Images on IPWatchdog Primarily
Provided by



Our website uses cookies to provide you with a better experience. Read our [privacy_policy](#) for more