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City Attorney Warns of Coronavirus-related Price Gouging *Asks public to report illegal price hikes during public health emergency*

The City Attorney's Office today advised San Diegans to beware of price gouging while the public health emergency declaration regarding the novel coronavirus is in effect in San Diego County and California.

Overcharging for consumer goods such as medical supplies, food, gas and other essentials during an emergency is illegal under state law. The law prohibits charging a price that is more than 10 percent higher than it was prior to the declaration of the state of emergency.

“We are committed to protecting consumers from those who prey on them during a public health crisis,” City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **“San Diegans shouldn’t have to worry about being cheated when taking the necessary precautions to stay healthy and prevent the spread of novel coronavirus. We are taking reports of price gouging seriously, and will hold accountable those who violate the law.”**

Reports of price gouging in the City of San Diego may be made the Affirmative Civil Enforcement Unit of the City Attorney's Office, at (619) 533-5800. Complaints may also be filed online, by filling out the ACE Complaint Form here:

<https://www.sandiego.gov/cityattorney/divisions/civillitigation/civilprosecution>

The San Diego City Attorney's Affirmative Civil Enforcement (ACE) Unit pursues public interest causes of action on behalf of the People of the State of California under the Unfair Competition Law, including consumer privacy, predatory lending, and unsafe and dangerous products. The ACE Unit enforces laws that protect consumers, employees, and the environment, and advocates for change when existing laws fall short. Through its own litigation and by collaborating with others inside and outside government, the ACE Unit protects public health and safety, restores environmental quality, and sustains economic vitality.

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