



San Diego City Attorney Jan I. Goldsmith

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Gina Coburn, Communications Director: (619) 533-6181

TOW COMPANY OWNER AND DRIVER PLEAD GUILTY TO ILLEGAL TOW CHARGES Court Orders Defendants to Pay \$30K in fines and restitution and cease most third-party tows

San Diego, CA: Pamela Aryubi, owner of Gamma Towing, and tow truck driver Randy Sailsbery, both pleaded guilty on August 4th to multiple criminal counts in San Diego Superior Court. Aryubi, who faced 52 criminal counts alleging unlawful towing activities, pleaded guilty to improperly failing to release a vehicle to the owner as required by law, providing compensation to third parties to secure tow jobs, unlawfully towing from property open to the public, charging unlawful excessive towing fees, failing to provide required notices to tow victims advising them who to contact if they felt their tow was illegal or improper, and failing to provide tow victims with authorizations from property owners stating the reason for the tow.

Randy Sailsbery pleaded guilty to failing to release a vehicle to the owner as required by law. In exchange for their pleas, both defendants paid full restitution in the amount of \$4,342.00 to fifteen victims in the case. Aryubi was ordered to pay a fine of \$25,000, and Sailsbery was fined \$3,800. Both defendants were placed on three years' probation and ordered to perform 60 days of public work service. Defendants were ordered not to engage in any towing activities of the type alleged in the complaint.

The City Attorney's Office filed charges against Aryubi and Sailsbery and two other defendants last year after investigating a number of complaints from citizens whose vehicles were towed by Gamma. One of the other defendants, Alfredo Kealoha, pleaded guilty earlier this year to unlawfully failing to release a vehicle to its owner as required by law and received probation, five days of public work and a \$2,500 fine. A fourth defendant, Leon Timmons, did not appear at arraignment, and a warrant for his arrest remains outstanding. "This case demonstrates my office's resolve to prosecute tow operators who flaunt laws designed to protect the public from abusive and sharp practices, and maintain a level playing field for competing businesses," said City Attorney Jan Goldsmith. "We will not tolerate such practices and will prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law," he added.

Mr. Goldsmith praised KUSI's Michael Turko for airing a series of "Turko Files" reports about illegal tow practices. "A large number of our victims came forward and filed complaints with our office as a result of Mr. Turko's reports. We thank him for helping us do justice for these victims and the public," he said.

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