



# San Diego City Attorney Jan I. Goldsmith

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **City Attorney's Office Convicts another Tow Operator**

**San Diego, CA:** The San Diego City Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit secured a conviction of another tow company for predatory practices. The owner of City Wide Towing, Arnaldo Rodriguez, pleaded guilty on Friday to three criminal charges arising from his towing practices. He pleaded guilty to failing to release a vehicle when the owner returned to the lot, towing without the authorization of the property owner, and unlawfully towing from property open to the public. Pursuant to a plea bargain, the remaining 42 criminal charges against him were dismissed.

Rodriguez operates City Wide Towing, located at 6331 University Ave., in San Diego. The City Attorney's Office received complaints from members of the public that their vehicles had been towed by City Wide Towing without their permission and the company failed to follow state law. The City Attorney has the authority to inspect the records of tow companies to ensure compliance with the law. A City Attorney investigator inspected the records of City Wide and found a pattern of failing to comply with the laws governing the towing of vehicles without the consent of the vehicle's owner. At the conclusion of the investigation, Deputy City Attorney Mike Hudson filed this criminal complaint against the owner of the business in December of 2011.

Mr. Rodriguez was placed on probation for 3 years. He was ordered to pay a fine of \$3000; is prohibited from committing future violations; and must perform Public Work Service. Mr. Rodriguez paid full restitution to eleven victims, totaling \$3160.

The Consumer Protection Unit maintains a hotline number for consumers to call if they see a violation of law involving illegal business practices. The telephone number is (619) 533-5600. The City Attorney's jurisdiction includes the City of San Diego and the City of Poway.

This prosecution follows earlier successful prosecutions of other tow companies by the City Attorney's Office. The other companies that have pleaded guilty to violating the tow laws are Gamma Towing and Millenium Towing.

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