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For Immediate Release

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DA Warns Business, Consumers of Price Gouging in Wake of San Diego Blackout

Suspected Price Gouging Can be Reported to DA's Office

San Diego County District Attorney [Bonnie M. Dumanis](#) today reminded residents and businesses of important consumer advice and assistance in the wake of San Diego's unprecedented blackout. The warning comes amid scattered news reports of potential price gouging in the past 24 hours.

"Unfortunately, some individuals use a time of crisis to take advantage of others," said DA Dumanis. "We want people to know consumer rights and legal protections are in place when San Diego is in a state of emergency, as it was yesterday. We also want businesses to know that the District Attorney's Office will hold price gougers accountable."

After a state of emergency is declared, it is illegal for businesses to increase prices of essential goods and services by more than ten percent unless they can prove it was due to an increase in their supplier's price. The prohibition on price gouging after a disaster applies to consumer food and services, goods or services used for emergency cleanup, supplies, medical supplies, home heating oil, building materials, housing, transportation, freight and storage services, and gasoline or other motor fuels.

In addition, it is a misdemeanor during 30 days following the state of emergency proclamation for a hotel or motel to increase regular rates. You can report suspected price gouging to the District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit at (619) 531-3115.

"For most San Diegans, yesterday's emergency was mostly a matter of inconvenience. But for those who found themselves in need of essential consumer goods, like a tank of gasoline so they could get home, the prohibition against price gouging is in place to stop unscrupulous businesses from turning an inconvenience into something criminal," said District Attorney Dumanis.

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