



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Statement of Prosecutor Marlene Lynch Ford Price Gouging Investigations

“The Ocean County Prosecutor’s Office is aware of complaints from residents relative to the activities of a towing service known as APK Towing of Toms River. While it is not our usual policy to comment on pending and ongoing investigations, we are asking that anyone with information regarding this business, or any one who has received a bill from this business related to services rendered in Seaside Heights, to please contact the investigators assigned to this matter: **Detective James Conroy or Detective Mark Malinowski at (732) 929-2027.**”

“The purpose of this investigation is to determine whether or not there has been any criminal wrongdoing associated with the business practices of this entity. We are collecting facts and information and will not comment publicly on this until our investigation is completed.

“Many people have been heroes during this recent disaster. Unfortunately, experience teaches us that fraudulent, overreaching, and unethical business practices are an almost certain aftermath of the disaster. There are many people who see this as an opportunity to prey upon people made vulnerable by a natural disaster.

“People with questions about a vendor or contractor can protect themselves by contacting the Ocean County Department of Consumer Affairs, at 732- 9929-2105. They can also check with the State Division of Consumer Affairs to confirm that a contractor is registered. Unregistered and unlicensed contractors are most frequently the subject of consumer fraud complaints.

“In the meantime, my office has established a Hurricane Sandy Task Force, which is investigating consumer complaints of criminal fraud. See OCPO Press Release dated November 2, 2012. People who take advantage of the public, during this time of disaster, will be vigorously prosecuted if their conduct is criminal in nature. Criminal fraud upon particularly vulnerable victims will certainly be an important factor in these types of cases,” said Prosecutor Ford.

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