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## VENTURA COUNTY

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March 2020

### Law Enforcement Warns Against Price Gouging

Ventura County law enforcement agencies want to warn local retailers and businesses about price gouging. Pursuant to Governor Newsom's March 4, 2020, state of emergency declaration in response to the COVID-19 virus, businesses, retailers, and other service or goods providers may not charge a price that is more than 10 percent higher of the price that existed prior to the declaration. Covered goods and services include: food, emergency supplies, medical supplies, building materials, gasoline, transportation, freight and storage services, hotel accommodations, and rental housing. Goods and service providers may charge more than 10 percent only if their costs have increased. These prohibitions are in effect until September 4, 2020.

Ventura County law enforcement agencies are working together to hold those responsible who engage in price gouging. Price gouging is a misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in jail and a fine of up to \$10,000. Violators may also be subject to civil enforcement actions and penalties up to \$5,000 per violation, plus restitution.

Residents should be vigilant and report any instances of price gouging incurring in Ventura County. Price gouging may be reported by calling the District Attorney's Office at (805) 662-1737, or by sending an email to [DAOpricegouging@ventura.org](mailto:DAOpricegouging@ventura.org).

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