Invercargill
CITY COUNCIL

Friday, July 4, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ATTENTION: CHIEF REPORTERS
CIVIC REPORTERS

Armourguard contracted by Council to provide more efficient Noise Control service

Invercargill City Council's Noise Control service has been fully contracted out, with Armourguard named as the 24/7 service provider to investigate noise complaints, effective July 1.

Armourguard will handle investigations such as loud stereos and noisy parties, however, any business-related noise complaints will still be dealt with by Council staff. The current Noise Control phone numbers will remain unchanged.

The Council made the decision to tender the service fully after reviewing its 2014/2015 Annual Plan. The findings highlighted that a faster response to calls could be achieved through a contracted service provider.

Council Environmental Health Manager John Youngson said the old system allowed a 30 minute stand down period for offenders who would receive a warning only after their second visit.

Council staff were used during work hours to attend visits, whilst the after-hours service was contracted out. It led to delays if staff were busy during work hours.

"We will now attend to all noise concerns straight away and people are going to get a warning on their first visit. We will also be issuing infringement notices if we are required to return, and property will also be seized," Mr Youngson said.

Manager Communications and Secretarial Services, Eirwen Harris, 211 1678, (027) 293 8680
Fax: 211 1434 Email:eirwen.harris@icc.govt.nz
Or
Communications Advisor, Andrei Robertson, 211 1601, (027) 231 3939
Fax: 211 1433 Email:andrei.robertson@icc.govt.nz

“Other Councils do the same thing, as staff can be dealing with dangerous situations. Armourguard staff are trained and have the backup of technology and the Police.”

The changes will address a rising number of complaints that are centred on certain areas in Invercargill. The previous system was time-consuming and costly for ratepayers - something the Council wanted to change. “We reviewed our policy and put services out for tender; this way we respond quicker, and also bring about compliance quicker. We hope we will start recovering costs through the increased infringements, whereas in the past we haven’t done that,” Mr Youngson said.

The cost for offenders to get their seized property back has been lowered to encourage them to pick up their equipment after offending. Previously, high fees saw a large number of unclaimed stereos held by Noise Control for long periods.

ENDS.

Inquiries, please contact John Youngson on (03) 211 1665

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