



DEC NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Anchorage car rental companies, owner indicted for evading emissions tests

Sept. 28, 2004—Anchorage--An Anchorage Grand Jury has returned a 49 count indictment against Anchorage Downtown Car Rental, LLC, Airport Car Rental and their owner Bart Green for falsifying vehicle registrations on 49 vehicles (each a Class C felony). In addition to the felony charges, on Sept. 16, 2004, Anchorage Downtown Car Rental and Mr. Green were charged by the Department of Law with 35 related Class A misdemeanor counts for evading vehicle air quality inspection and monitoring testing. Arraignment will be tomorrow, Sept. 29, 2004, in Anchorage Superior Court.

“Clean air in Anchorage depends on every vehicle owner doing their part to maintain the emission control system,” said Tom Chapple, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) director of air quality. “It is against the law for vehicle owners and businesses to avoid vehicle inspection and maintenance (I/M) testing by falsifying their residence address when registering a vehicle with DMV.”

DEC pursued this case after being notified by the Division of Motor Vehicles of possible I/M fraud. DEC and the Municipality confirmed that the vehicles were used and located in Anchorage, yet registered to a Seward address to avoid the I/M testing requirement.

"In our experience, the reason people register an Anchorage vehicle outside the city is because it may have been poorly maintained, or some emission control systems may have been tampered with or removed," said Keith Beason, the Municipality's I/M program administrator. "In these cases the vehicle may not pass an I/M test since it emits high rates of pollution."

The I/M program was established in Anchorage as a pollution reduction strategy to meet national public health standards for carbon monoxide. In recent years, the health standard has been met. Properly maintained vehicles and newer cars with lower emission rates will be critical to maintaining clean air as population and vehicle use increase over time.

If found guilty, Mr. Green could face fines up to \$5,000 and 5 years in prison per felony count and fines up to \$10,000 and 1 year in prison per misdemeanor count. His businesses, Anchorage Downtown Car Rental, LLC and Airport Car Rental could face fines up to \$200,000 per count.

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