



ERIK NASARENKO
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE



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Contact: Joey Buttitta
Title: Communications Manager/PIO
Phone: (805) 767-3400
Email: Joey.Buttitta@ventura.org

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Albertsons & Vons to Pay Nearly \$4 Million to Resolve Price Accuracy Claims

VENTURA, Calif. – Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Albertsons and Vons entered into a stipulated judgment and will pay \$3,962,500 to settle a civil law enforcement complaint alleging the companies engaged in false advertising and unfair competition for repeated price accuracy violations. Albertsons Companies, Safeway Inc., and The Vons Companies operate 589 stores in California.

The action was filed in Marin County Superior Court on behalf of the District Attorney's Offices of Ventura, Marin, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Diego, Sonoma, and Alameda Counties. The civil complaint alleged that the companies unlawfully charged customers higher prices than their lowest advertised or posted price. Additionally, some stores were alleged to have sold fresh produce, meat, and bakery items at prices that included the weight of the packaging itself, or for more than the weight of the actual item, in violation of California Business & Professions Code sections 12023 and 12024.

"What's posted on the grocery product is what the consumer should pay," said District Attorney Nasarenko. "When grocery corporations mislead consumers with false prices and hidden costs, they should be held accountable and stopped from inflicting financial harm."

The Stipulated Judgment includes an injunction that prohibits the companies from engaging in false or misleading advertising and prohibits several unfair practices. It also requires the companies to implement a Price Accuracy Program which includes a Price Accuracy Guarantee provision allowing a consumer to be compensated up to \$5.00 if they are overcharged. The companies will pay \$3,213,000.00 in civil penalties and \$749,500 in costs and restitution to cover investigation costs and support future enforcement of consumer protection laws.