

1 June, 2010

NZ Transport Agency - Auckland/Northland Region

NZTA warns toll evaders of heavy fines

The NZ Transport Agency is writing to those people with multiple unpaid trips on the Northern Gateway Toll Road to tell them that they have until 14 June to make good their debts.

If they have not paid by then, the NZTA will issue an infringement notice of \$40 for each unpaid trip.

The toll road's operating report for the six months to the end of December, 2009, reports that debtors owe a total of \$525,254.08 – about 5% of the highway's total revenue of \$9.84million.

The person with the highest debt operates two vehicles, and has a combined total of 667 unpaid trips with a debt of \$1, 8750.20. This person is liable for \$26,680 in fines, with a \$40 infringement fee applying to each unpaid trip. The worst single vehicle offender has 469 unpaid trips and would owe \$18,760 in fines.

The crackdown is a matter of fairness, says the NZTA's Regional Director for Auckland and Northland, Wayne McDonald.

"The toll road is a user pays section of highway. Overall compliance is very high – around 95% - but it those others who repeatedly refuse avoid paying that we are targeting," he says. "They will face heavy fines - in many cases costing several thousands of dollars."

Cars, light trucks and motorcyclists are charged \$2 for each trip on the toll road, and heavy vehicles pay \$4. People have five days to pay before a toll payment notice is issued – it includes a \$2.20 administration fee as well as the unpaid toll. If there is no response to the notice, the NZTA then commences debt collection. The \$40 infringement notice is the final step for non-payment.

"Up until now we have been concentrating on recovering unpaid fees through debt collection processes, but we will also begin issuing infringement notices to recidivist toll evaders in two weeks," says Mr McDonald.

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