This morning, the Formentera Council office of environment released figures from 2015 showing a spike over the last year in €751-€1,500 fines for dumping. Daisee Aguilera, CiF environment councillor, pointed out that the ramping up of fines reflects a new reality in which disregard for private land and illegal dumping carry repercussions. Aguilera said residents can expect to see more of the same tough enforcement in 2016.

Of the 70 fines issued for illegal dumping in 2015, 15 were for offences classed as 'major' while the remainder were 'minor'. By contrast, in 2014 roughly 60 fines were written, of which, said Aguilera, only two of which were major. Of the 15 major infractions in 2015, seven were for illegal dumping outside a bin and three were for dumping within the Ses Salines national park. Penalties were additionally issued in five cases of dumping that took place on private property. The two major infractions cited in 2014 were both for dumping outside a bin.

More checks

“The Council has stepped up checks on private plots in rural areas to ensure rules on safety, salubrity and public property are respected”. In addition, the councillor took the opportunity to remind residents of the Council's fining scale: €1 to €750 for minor offences, €751 to €1,500 for mid-level offences and €1,501 to €3,000 for major offences. Aguilera urged the people of Formentera to use the new collection station in the Sant Francesc industrial park, “intended for hazardous materials, home appliances and any waste that is too big for streetside bins”. She also reminded residents of the CiF's completely free home pickup service for appliances and furniture, which can be reached by calling 900 102 656.

According to Aguilera, “the island's image depends on everybody”. Asserting that “behaviour like littering directly impacts our local economy and environment”, the councillor underscored the need to protect what she called “the main draw for Formentera's visitors”. Moreover, she pointed to complaints from Formentera locals about the toll dumping has already taken on the island's image. Aguilera also seized on the opportunity to thank the Council's waste collection crews for “minimising the effects of the antisocial behaviour of a small minority”.

Councillor Aguilera underscored the crucial role of Formentera local police, who have ramped up their patrols, in the crackdown. Finally, looking ahead to summer 2016, the environment councillor announced the CiF's plans to roll out an awareness-raising campaign aimed not only at island residents but also merchants, restaurants, holiday rental properties, hotel owners and concessionaires of beachside bars.