

OFFICE OF DAKOTA COUNTY ATTORNEY
JAMES C. BACKSTROM
COUNTY ATTORNEY



Dakota County Judicial Center
1560 Highway 55
Hastings, Minnesota 55033-2392
Phillip D. Prokopowicz, Chief Deputy
Karen A. Schaffer, First Assistant
Monica Jensen, Community Relations Director

Telephone
(651) 438-4438
FAX: (651) 438-4479 (Civil Division)
FAX: (651) 438-4500 (Criminal Division)
FAX: (651) 438-4499 (Juvenile/Admin Division)
E-mail: attorney@co.dakota.mn.us

April 26, 2012

NEWS RELEASE

TWO MEN CHARGED WITH MAJOR FINANCIAL CRIMES

Dakota County Attorney James Backstrom announced that **Scott Alan Schoaf**, age 49 of Rosemount, has been charged* with two counts of Theft and two counts of Theft By Swindle (all felonies) in connection with taking monies paid by clients in excess of \$72,000 as owner of a collection agency, Alternative Receivables Solutions Incorporated (ARS), for the period of June 2009 to March 2010. The criminal complaint filed alleges the following facts:

The Minnesota Department of Commerce (DOC) in October 2009 selected Alternative Receivables Solutions Incorporated (ARS) for a random audit. The audit revealed that ARS was “out of trust” on trust accounts maintained by the business, had co-mingled client funds with operating funds, and failed to remit to clients (creditors) some client funds that ARS had collected from debtors on the client creditors’ behalf. It was also discovered that ARS had three trust accounts and separate operating accounts. The audit revealed that ARS frequently transferred trust accounts funds into the operating accounts and the trust account had a negative balance 44 times in 2009.

Backstrom thanked the Rosemount Police Department and the Minnesota Department of Commerce for their thorough investigation into this matter.

Schoaf was charged by summons and his first court appearance has not been scheduled.

In a separate case, **Stephen Lamers**, age 40 of Owatonna, has been charged* with nine counts of Theft by Swindle in connection with a theft scheme involving several businesses in Dakota County while employed as a liquor distributor in excess of \$70,000 from April 2007 to August 2011. The criminal complaint filed alleges the following facts:

The Hastings Police Department received information of possible theft by a liquor distributor working as a sales representative with a restaurant located in Hastings and a restaurant/bar in Farmington. Lamers would place a will-call order for a customer and pick up the order at the liquor distributor’s warehouse. Lamers would sign the invoice at the loading dock, receive a copy of the invoice, but would not deliver the product to the customer. He would later sell the product for cash to other customers. The invoice amount would be billed to the customer and if they did not verify this information, they would be unaware that they were paying for liquor that was not delivered.

Backstrom thanked the Hastings Police Department and the Minnesota Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement Division for their thorough investigation into this matter. The next court appearance for Lamers will May 21, 2012 at 8:30 a.m. in Hastings.

Additional facts pertaining to these cases can be found online at www.DakotaCounty.us/Attorney (click on Criminal Complaint Search and/or News Release).

Backstrom commented: “It is disturbing to see individuals and businesses taken advantage of in this manner. Since 2001, we have charged 32 adults in Dakota County with major economic crimes in excess of \$50,000.”

For more information, contact James Backstrom at 651-438-4440.

**Criminal charges are not evidence of guilt. A defendant/suspect is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.*