

**News Release**

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Lake Elmo Man Facing Felony Tax Charges

Saint Paul – The Minnesota Department of Revenue announced today that the Washington County Attorney’s Office recently charged Ronald Bougie, 46, of Lake Elmo, with nine felony tax crimes.

Bougie is charged with five counts of failing to file returns for tax years 2005 through 2009, three counts of failing to pay taxes for tax years 2005, 2006 and 2008 and one count of failure to pay over state funds that were collected.

According to the complaint, Bougie had been bragging to people about not paying his taxes. An investigation found that he had failed to file tax returns since 2001. Bougie owned a business, “Fantastic Finishes,” later known as “Fantastic Finishes and Woodworking.”

The complaint also states that Bougie claimed a monthly income of \$4,800 in 2007.

The investigation also found that Bougie co-mingled his personal and business finances. The complaint states he wrote checks from his business account for gambling, fireworks, food and trips.

In January 2011, Bougie admitted to department investigators that he had not filed taxes despite knowing he was supposed to.

It was also discovered that Bougie had not filed sales tax returns since 2001. He denied ever charging sales tax on his business transactions. However, during a search warrant, investigators found invoices for his business which showed he charged and collected sales tax between 2004 and 2008. Tax returns prepared for 2005 through 2008 were also found, which had never been filed.

Bougie was asked if he hadn’t filed because he didn’t want to pay taxes owed and he agreed. He was also asked if he didn’t file in the years he was owed a refund because the refund would have been seized to pay outstanding child support and he also agreed.

Each felony is punishable by up to five years in prison, up to a \$10,000 fine, or both.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue has a 24-hour tip line for anyone who suspects an individual or business is violating tax laws, at (651) 297-5195 or 1-800-657-3500. Tipsters may remain anonymous and can also email the department at tax.fraud@state.mn.us. Last year, citizen tips resulted in 75 percent of the department's criminal case referrals.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue is dedicated to enforcing tax laws, collecting no more and no less than taxpayers owe. It takes progressively stricter measures against taxpayers who demonstrate they will not voluntarily meet their obligations.

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