

**News Release**

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Prior Lake Christmas Business Owner Charged With Tax Evasion

St. Paul – The Minnesota Department of Revenue announced today that the Scott County Attorney’s Office recently charged Robert Wayne Schlosser, 33, of Prior Lake with 15 felony tax crimes.

Schlosser has been charged with four counts of failing to file income tax returns, two counts of filing false or fraudulent income tax returns, four counts of failing to pay income tax, and five counts of failing to file sales tax returns.

According to the criminal complaint, Schlosser is the owner of a business called Custom Christmas Tree Lighting, and specializes in putting up and taking down Christmas tree lights. There is, however, no record of a business by that name being registered by Schlosser with the Secretary of State’s office. The complaint further states that Schlosser told a department auditor that he made about \$200,000 a year from his business and employed several crews. Also, said the complaint, Schlosser “significantly” under-reported his net income and income taxes owed for the years 2006-2010. The investigation showed, for example, that Schlosser paid \$32,027 in rent in 2009 while reporting only \$21,049 in net income on his Minnesota income tax return.

Each charge carries a maximum penalty of up to five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue has a 24-hour tip line for anyone who suspects an individual or business is violating tax laws. That number is (651) 297-5195, or 1-800-657-3500 (TTY users call 711 for Minnesota Relay). Tipsters may remain anonymous and can also email the department at tax.fraud@state.mn.us. Last year, citizen tips totaled 75 percent of the department’s criminal case referrals.

While most taxpayers comply with tax laws voluntarily, the Minnesota Department of Revenue takes progressive enforcement action against non-compliant taxpayers ensuring tax laws are fairly administered, collecting no more and no less than taxpayers owe.

Learn how the Minnesota Department of Revenue is working to stop tax evasion on recreational vehicles [here](#).

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