

## News Release

**CONTACT** Lisa Erickson  
**PHONE** 651-556-6397  
**E-MAIL** [lisa.erickson@state.mn.us](mailto:lisa.erickson@state.mn.us)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

December 10, 2014

Contact: Lisa Erickson  
Phone: 651-556-6397  
[Lisa.erickson@state.mn.us](mailto:Lisa.erickson@state.mn.us)

### **St. Paul business owner charged with tax crimes**

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** – The Minnesota Department of Revenue announced that the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office recently charged Richard Brinkhaus, 55, of Plymouth, with 10 tax-related felonies.

Brinkhaus is charged with two counts of making retail sales after his company’s sales tax permit was revoked, four counts of failing to file income tax returns and four counts of failing to pay taxes.

According to the criminal complaint, Brinkhaus owns AA Party & Tent Rentals in St. Paul. During an audit, the department discovered Brinkhaus had never paid sales tax on any of his business sales, owing more than \$200,000 in taxes, penalties, and interest.

In 2011, the department revoked the sales tax permit. The department informed Brinkhaus by letter and phone that making sales after revocation would be a felony. The complaint states that in 2012, he admitted to the department that he made sales after his permit was revoked.

According to the complaint, Brinkhaus also allegedly failed to file income tax returns and pay income taxes for tax years 2009 through 2012. The department estimates Brinkhaus owes more than \$27,000 in delinquent income taxes.

Each felony charge carries a maximum penalty of up to five years in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine. Defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Although most taxpayers comply with tax laws voluntarily, the Minnesota Department of Revenue takes enforcement action against noncompliant taxpayers to ensure tax laws are fairly administered.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue has a 24-hour tip line for anyone who suspects a person or business is violating tax laws. That number is 651-297-5195, or 1-800-657-3500. Tipsters may remain anonymous and can also email the department at [tax.fraud@state.mn.us](mailto:tax.fraud@state.mn.us). In 2013, 85 percent of the department's criminal case referrals came from citizen tips.

Follow the latest news and updates from the Minnesota Department of Revenue on [Twitter](#), and [Facebook](#), and sign up for our [email subscription list](#).

##