

News Release

CONTACT Lisa Erickson
PHONE 651-556-6397
E-MAIL lisa.erickson@state.mn.us

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Contact: Lisa Erickson
Phone: 651-556-6397
Lisa.erickson@state.mn.us

Buffalo couple charged with tax crimes

ST. PAUL, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Revenue announced that the Wright County Attorney’s Office recently charged Joseph and Sheila Bethke, of Buffalo, with 15 tax-related felonies, each.

Mr. and Mrs. Bethke are each charged with 10 counts of failing to file taxes and 5 counts of failing to pay taxes, during tax years 2008 through 2012.

According to the criminal complaint, the couple operates a business, JSB Engineered Solutions Inc., but failed to file individual or S-Corp tax returns between 2008 and 2012. Mr. and Mrs. Bethke have failed to voluntarily file tax returns since 2000.

The couple allegedly owes the state more than \$107,000 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. In 2014, 87 percent of the department’s criminal case referrals came from citizen tips.

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