



News Release

CONTACT Ryan Brown
PHONE 651-556-6750
E-MAIL ryan.brown@state.mn.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 22, 2015

Contact: Ryan Brown
ryan.brown@state.mn.us

Blaine man charged with tax crime

ST. PAUL, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Revenue announced that the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office recently charged Atef Mouhamad Maarouf with a tax-related felony.

Maarouf is charged with one count of possession of untaxed tobacco products. The charge stems from a joint investigation between the Minnesota Department of Revenue and the Minnesota State Patrol.

The complaint states that Maarouf was stopped for speeding by the Minnesota State Patrol in December 2014. Maarouf was driving a rental truck containing approximately \$30,000 worth of tobacco products--mostly loose tobacco--that he purchased from an out-of-state wholesaler. The Minnesota State Patrol held the truck as evidence and members of the Minnesota State Patrol and the Minnesota Department of Revenue executed a search warrant for the truck.

Maarouf allegedly evaded approximately \$28,500 in Minnesota taxes by purchasing the tobacco products from an out-of-state wholesaler that did not collect the required tax, according to the complaint.

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

This is just one example of the department’s ongoing efforts to uniformly enforce the state’s cigarette and tobacco laws.

For more information on the rules and laws for retailers selling tobacco products, [visit our webpage with information on tobacco taxes in Minnesota.](#)

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

The Minnesota Department of Revenue has a 24-hour tip line for anyone who suspects that a person or business is violating Minnesota tax laws. Local callers may dial 651-297-5195 or call

News Release

CONTACT Ryan Brown
PHONE 651-556-6750
E-MAIL ryan.brown@state.mn.us

toll-free by dialing 1-800-657-3500. Tips can also be submitted to the department via email at tax.fraud@state.mn.us. Tipsters may choose to remain anonymous. In 2014, 87 percent of the department's criminal case referrals came from citizen tips.

Get the latest news and updates from the Minnesota Department of Revenue by following the department on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) or by signing up for our [email subscription list](#).

###