



News Release

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North Metro men charged with more tax crimes

ST. PAUL, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Revenue announced that the Anoka County Attorney’s Office recently charged Mushtak Sadoun Al-Sayab and Hussam Masoud with one count each of felony possession of untaxed tobacco products.

Beginning in 2010, Mr. Masoud and Mr. Al-Sayab traveled out of state to purchase tobacco products which they would bring into Minnesota for resale without paying Minnesota tobacco tax. Neither man was a licensed distributor of tobacco products.

A 2014 investigation by the Minnesota Department of Revenue resulted in felony criminal charges filed by Ramsey County for possessing more than \$1,400 worth of untaxed tobacco products. According to court records, both Mr. Al-Sayab and Mr. Masoud admitted knowing that it was illegal for a person, other than a licensed distributor or a consumer, to possess, receive, or transport tobacco products without paying the tax. They were each convicted of the crimes in Ramsey County earlier this year.

The recent Anoka County criminal complaints against the men state that investigators from the Minnesota Department of Revenue, the Hennepin County Violent Offender Task Force, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General, executed a search warrant in August 2015 on a storage unit rented by Mr. Masoud. The unit contained over \$64,000 worth of untaxed tobacco products, according to the complaint.

Each tax-related felony charge carries a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison, a \$10,000 fine, or both. Defendants are presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty.

This is an example of the department’s ongoing efforts to uniformly enforce the state’s cigarette and tobacco laws. For more information on the tax laws related to tobacco products in Minnesota, [visit our website](#).

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.

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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 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.

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](#).

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