

## News Release

CONTACT Ryan Brown  
PHONE 651-556-6397  
E-MAIL [ryan.brown@state.mn.us](mailto:ryan.brown@state.mn.us)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

March 6, 2019

Contact: Ryan Brown

[ryan.brown@state.mn.us](mailto:ryan.brown@state.mn.us)

### **Blaine man charged with tobacco-related tax crime**

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** – The Minnesota Department of Revenue announced that the Anoka County Attorney’s Office recently charged Tarek Youssef Kablawi, of Blaine, with one felony count of possessing untaxed tobacco products.

According to the complaint, Mr. Kablawi owns a convenience store, Gas-N-More, in Blaine, Minnesota. During two random inspections at this business, department investigators allegedly found and seized more than \$3,000 worth of untaxed tobacco products. According to the complaint, more than \$2,850 in tax should have been paid on those products.

Each tax-related felony charge carries a maximum penalty of five years in jail, 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.

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](mailto: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](#).

###