



REBECCA OTTO
STATE AUDITOR

STATE OF MINNESOTA OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

SUITE 500
525 PARK STREET
SAINT PAUL, MN 55103-2139

(651) 296-2551 (Voice)
(651) 296-4755 (Fax)
state.auditor@osa.state.mn.us (E-mail)
1-800-627-3529 (Relay Service)

*****PRESS RELEASE*****

State Auditor Otto Releases Criminal Forfeitures Report

Contact: Jim Levi, Office of the State Auditor, (651) 297-3683, Jim.Levi@osa.state.mn.us

ST. PAUL (5/30/2012) – State Auditor Rebecca Otto today released the Criminal Forfeitures Report, which provides information on the amount of cash and property seized subject to forfeiture by Minnesota law enforcement agencies where the final disposition was completed in 2010.

This report reflects data reported before and after major statutory changes in forfeiture reporting which were enacted by the 2010 Legislature. The changes expanded the scope of information that must be reported to the Office of the State Auditor. Additionally, the reporting requirements are now linked to a broader range of forfeitures including those involving driving under the influence (DUI), game and fish violations, off-road vehicle violations, gambling, and racketeering.

Highlights from the report include:

- In 2010, 271 Minnesota law enforcement agencies reported a total of 4,604 incidents of property seized subject to forfeiture where final disposition was completed. Of the 4,604 incidents, 1,405 were reported to the Office of the State Auditor before new reporting requirements went into effect August 1, 2010, while 3,199 were reported after the implementation of the new requirements.
- Gross sales of forfeited property or seized cash totaled \$5,367,197 in 2010; administrative expenses and lien holder's obligations totaled \$952,060 and net proceeds totaled \$4,464,455 in 2010.
- Vehicles accounted for 42 percent of property seized (19 percent in 2009), followed by cash at 42 percent (54 percent in 2009), firearms at 15 percent (26 percent in 2009), and other property at 1 percent (same as 2009).

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- Of the 4,604 forfeiture incidents reported where the final disposition was completed, 3,711 involved seized cash, property that was sold, or an agreement that required monetary compensation to the agency. The total value of net proceeds from these forfeitures was \$4,464,455. Net proceeds derived from forfeitures ranged from \$0 to \$105,000. Net proceeds per forfeiture incident averaged \$1,203 in 2010.
- The most common criminal activities leading to seizure, forfeiture, and final disposition of property in 2010 were controlled substance and DUI-related. Forfeitures involving a controlled substance accounted for 2,918, or 63 percent, of reported incidents, while DUI-related forfeitures accounted for 1,077, or 23 percent, of reported incidents.
- The agencies with 100 or more forfeiture incidents completed in 2010 were the Minnesota State Patrol (519), the Minneapolis Police Department (282), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Enforcement Division (211), the Dakota County Drug Task Force (178), the Southeast Minnesota Drug Task Force (171), and the Saint Paul Police Department (112).
- In addition to the 271 law enforcement agencies that completed forfeitures in 2010, 176 agencies indicated that they had no forfeitures to report in 2010, and 38 agencies did not provide any information to the Office of the State Auditor regarding their forfeiture activity in 2010.

The complete report, which includes an executive summary, tables and graphs, can be accessed at:

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20120529.001>.

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The Office of the State Auditor is a constitutional office that is charged with overseeing more than \$20 billion spent annually by local governments in Minnesota. The Office of the State Auditor does this by performing audits of local government financial statements, and by reviewing documents, data, reports, and complaints reported to the Office. The financial information collected from local governments is analyzed and is the basis of statutory reports issued by the Office of the State Auditor.

Rebecca Otto is Minnesota's 18th State Auditor. A high-resolution official photo is available for download at http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/images/otto_hires.jpg. To learn more about State Auditor Otto, see <http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=bio>.