

**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 18, 2006

CONTACT:

Duane Zussy, Special Projects administrator
Leon County Tax Collector's Office
3425 Thomasville Road, Suite 19
Tallahassee, FL 32309
850-488-2139 (Voice)
850-488-7828 (Fax)
zussyd@leoncountyfl.gov
www.leontaxcollector.net

**Leon County Tax Collector Initiates a Cost Saving Approach to
Collecting Delinquent Business Taxes**

State law requires Leon County Tax Collector, Doris Maloy, to issue Tax Warrants on the tangible personal property owned and used by local businesses that have failed to pay the taxes due on that property each year. On June 30, 2005, Circuit Court Judge Sjostrom signed an Order confirming those Warrants for enforcement. A copy of the signed Court Order is attached.

Traditionally, Court action such as this has cleared the way for Tax Collector personnel to present such delinquent taxpayers with the choice of paying their debt or having their property seized and sold at public auction to satisfy their obligation. However, there is another method of collection that is routinely used in other Florida counties to achieve compliance more quickly and at lower cost to the taxpayers.

Because confirmed Tax Warrants have the full force and effect of a Writ of Garnishment, the Tax Collector can, at her discretion, initiate direct action to garnish the bank accounts of these delinquent taxpayers for the full amount due.

Through this process, moneys held in the name of the delinquent taxpayer by any bank in Florida can be "frozen" pending payment. If the funds in the bank account are not sufficient to meet the delinquent tax obligation, the Tax Collector's enforcement staff can still proceed to levy upon and seize other personal property of the delinquent taxpayer to collect the remainder of the obligation.

Because Tax Warrants have not been enforced in this manner in Leon County prior to this year, Mrs. Maloy has concluded that her enforcement staff will make every reasonable effort to contact each of these delinquent taxpayers one last time prior to initiating action to garnish their bank account(s). Those businesses that are not able to pay their obligation in full may be offered the opportunity to enter into a time payment plan. Those who continue to refuse payment will face the probability that their funds will be garnished and/or their property seized and sold to satisfy this debt.

As of this date, some seven hundred (700) local businesses remain on the list of those who are likely to face this new approach to compliance enforcement.

All tax debts due will be collected as required by law.

"Making Taxing Situations Easier"