



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
Taxation and Revenue Department
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DIVISIONS

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(505) 827-0369
Audit and Compliance
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Motor Vehicle
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Property Tax
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Revenue Processing
(505) 827-0800
Tax Fraud Investigations
(505) 841-6544

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 21, 2012

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New Mexico Hunting Outfitter Indicted On Tax Evasion Charges

SANTA FE – A New Mexico hunting outfitter has been indicted on attempted tax evasion charges for allegedly not filing or paying over \$36,000 in gross receipts taxes owed to the State from 2006 through 2009.

A Santa Fe grand jury on Tuesday returned an indictment against Kevin L. Sears on six counts of attempts to evade or defeat tax. Sears, who is believed to be living in Virginia, operates Southern Divide Trophy Outfitters in New Mexico. He runs outfitted hunts on several different ranches in western New Mexico from the Grants to Gallup area south to Quemado.

“This individual has blatantly ignored our laws and then boldly made statements to his customers regarding the ability to stay under the radar by dealing in cash,” said Demesia Padilla, Cabinet Secretary for the State Taxation and Revenue Department. “No one is above the law when it comes to paying their fair share of taxes; and we will go after anyone who tries to defraud our taxpayers.”

Officials for the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish tipped off state tax agents after some of Sears’ customers told them that Sears stated that he preferred cash in order to stay under the radar since it is harder to trace. The State Taxation and Revenue Department’s Tax Fraud Investigations Division investigated the case and determined Sears has not paid his gross receipts taxes for a three-year period.

“We are always pleased to assist our sister agencies in these types of investigations that not only defraud New Mexico taxpayers, but also place our state’s hunting industry in a bad light,” New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Director Jim Lane said. “We have very clear laws that apply to outfitters that we will continue to diligently enforce.”

If convicted of all these charges, Sears, 47, could face a maximum sentence of six years in prison and \$60,000 in fines. To report tax fraud against the State of New Mexico, contact the Tax Fraud Hotline at 1-866-457-6789.