

Revenue Department Warns Citizens About Water Rights Adjudication Fee Scam

The Montana Department of Revenue today issued an alert to citizens in the area of Opportunity, Montana, and Deer Lodge County warning them to be aware of a scam involving water rights adjudication fee payments.

The Department of Revenue has received information that an individual is going door-to-door in Opportunity representing himself as an employee of the Department of Revenue. The individual is not employed by the department in any capacity. This person is allegedly attempting to collect \$20 from citizens, claiming the funds are required for payment of the water rights adjudication fee.

"This activity is not authorized by the Department of Revenue, and is illegal," said revenue director Dan Bucks. "We want citizens to be aware so they do not fall prey to this scam."

The water rights adjudication fee is administered by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). The purpose of the fees is to support DNRC in the examination of water right claims and gather information the Montana Water Court may use in settling claims.

In December, the Department of Revenue mailed bills, on behalf of DNRC, to thousands of individuals and organizations who claim rights to water from Montana streams and aquifers. Individuals receiving these bills were asked to remit payment directly to the Department of Revenue, using an enclosed payment coupon. The department's address was printed on the coupons.

The Department of Revenue is working closely with local law enforcement and DNRC to thoroughly investigate this matter.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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