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## **2005 NW3C NATIONAL SURVEY: NEARLY ONE IN TWO HOUSEHOLDS EXPERIENCED AT LEAST ONE FORM OF WHITE COLLAR CRIME WITHIN THE PAST YEAR**

FAIRMONT, WV – MARCH 7, 2006 – The National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C) released today the results of their 2005 national survey. The survey is a follow-up to the original, conducted in 1999, and is aimed at assessing white collar crime victimization and reporting behaviors, as well as public perception of this type of crime. Responses were collected from a nationally representative sample of over 1600 U.S. households.

The findings of the survey show that nearly one in two households (46.5%) report having experienced at least one form of white collar crime victimization within the past year. Additionally, well over half of survey respondents (62.5%) report having experienced this crime at some point during their lifetime. This number, when applied to the nationwide population, suggests that more than 130 million Americans have been victimized at least once in their life. NW3C Director Don Brackman commented that, "It is clear from the results of the survey that white collar crime is growing and that it does not discriminate." He added that, "Now, more than ever, it is crucial for us to continue to unite the efforts between local, state, federal and international agencies that will allow the nation to more effectively fight this crime."

There were several findings in the 2005 survey results that saw a dramatic change from the 1999 survey. With regard to types of fraud committed, credit card fraud has seen a dramatic increase. The results also tell us that the public continues to see white collar crime in an increasingly harsh light, now commonly viewing it as a crime that is as serious as other more traditional types of crime, like assault, robbery and burglary, for examples. Approximately two-thirds (67%) of victimized households are now also reporting white collar crimes against them, compared with just 41% in the study conducted five years ago.

Despite an increase in public scrutiny, there still remains a disparity between the number of white collar crimes committed and those that are actually brought to the attention of law enforcement. Only 14% of the crimes uncovered through the present survey were reported to a crime control agency with the ability to provide investigative or prosecutory courses of action. Additionally, over half (56.7%) of the public surveyed do not feel the government is allocating enough resources to

fight this crime. "This finding highlights the importance of increasing the focus on funding sources in fighting white collar crime, and on spreading the message to the public on proper reporting methods," says Brackman.

In conclusion, Brackman stated, "The 2005 national survey will prove to be a valuable tool in understanding the status of white collar crime victimization, its perception among the public, and most importantly, how to improve methods of fighting this crime effectively." The entire survey is 45 pages and is available for download on the NW3C web site at [www.nw3c.org](http://www.nw3c.org). For additional information about the survey please contact NW3C at (800) 221 – 4424.

### **About NW3C**

A congressionally-funded non-profit organization, NW3C has been continuously funded for the past 28 years in support of state and local enforcement efforts to prevent, investigate, and prosecute economic and cyber crimes. NW3C is a national program supporting state and local enforcement agencies with a presence in all 50 states. Membership in NW3C is free and open to local, state, federal and international law enforcement; regulatory and prosecution agencies; as well as duly constituted permanent task forces. NW3C helps agencies coordinate enforcement efforts to combat emerging economic and cyber crimes.

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