

**Who Should File Sales and Use Tax?**

According to the Sales and Use Tax Ordinance of 1968, anyone who is defined as doing business in the local jurisdiction is expected to register to file sales and/or use tax. Of course, doing business as defined by R.S 47:301 means and include anyone who is engaged in activity with the objective being one of gain, benefit, or advantage either directly or indirectly. The opportunity for gain may be in the form of selling goods, services, leases or rents tangible personal property or the purchasing tangible personal property for use or consumption. The formality of granting authorization to a dealer to collect and remit sales and use tax is through the issuance of a sales tax certificate once registration is complete.

**Payment Options Are Expanded**

Starting in January 2010, as part of department goals, payment options have been expanded to include the acceptance of Visa and Master Card. To some, it has been a long time arriving, and perhaps long overdue according to others. Nonetheless, the day for paying with a credit card is here. Although the payment option is being limited to Visa and Master Card, we remain optimistic in regard to the advantage dealers now have as a payment tool. Unfortunately, there is a downside to paying with a credit card. The service will not be free. Instead, a charge or convenience fee will be added to



any money due at the time of payment when a credit card is used. That same convenience fee will be either a flat fee or a percentage depending on the volume of money (tax due) at the time of payment. Hopefully this option will be simple, convenient, and worth the small fee.

**Closing a Business**

Whenever a dealer chooses to cease doing business in the parish for whatever reason, there are responsibilities remaining that must be attended to.

First, the **Sales Tax Registration Certificate** including the appropriate information relative to closing should be returned to the office with the Sales and/or Use Tax Report marked **Final Return**. This procedure is necessary in order to avoid unnecessary events that may prove to be costly. Keep in mind that, until notified, the office will continue to observe each business as ongoing and totally active which may ignite delinquency, lien activity and maybe even monetary judgments. Therefore, going out of business should not be taken lightly and surely should not result in just closing the doors and walking away without notifying our office properly. An added step should include contacting the applicable Occupational License Department to ensure closing requirements are met and compliance is adequately handled. For assistance with either step in closing a business properly, contact your local Sales Tax Office.



**Local Sales Tax Holidays**

Our offices will be closed on the following dates for the holidays mentioned:

- Independence Day...July 5, 2010
- Labor Day.....Sept. 6, 2010
- Election Day.....Nov. 2, 2010
- Veterans Day.....Nov. 11, 2010
- Thanksgiving....Nov. 22-26, 2010
- Christmas.....Dec. 20-31, 2010

In addition, our regular office hours through May are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. Summer hours in June and July will be 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Our office is open during the lunch hour throughout the year.

Have a happy and safe summer.



**How to Contact Us**

When calling the Sales Tax Department for service or information, you will find it easier to contact the proper person since we have expanded our phone choices and options to include a staff directory that will prompt the caller to enter the first two letters of the desired party's last name. Once that step is initiated, a selection of staff members becomes available to permit contacting the desired sales tax personnel. This small detail is clearly another approach to providing improved services to the community.

Our main number is **(337) 217-4280** and fax number is **(337) 217-4281**. Extension for general customer assistance is 3413; for administration dial extension 3423; for delinquent returns dial 3406; and for audit information dial 3419.

### Want to Purchase an On-going Business?

Anyone who decides not to start a new business but chooses to acquire an established business should know there are compliance guidelines to consider prior to acquiring an on-going business. The reasons are simple. First, the consequences may be costly if the tax status of a business, whether current or delinquent, is not known before acquisition. And second, a deeper search should be made to determine whether or not any legal actions are binding like Liens, Judgments or suits prior to purchase. Otherwise, again additional consequences may be costly.

The proper step would be to contact the local Sales Tax Office to confirm the company is properly registered to collect and remit sales and use tax. Further, research the payment status to verify whether the company is current or delinquent. If the status of a company purchased is delinquent, the buyer could inherit the outstanding tax liability including tax, penalty and interest due and unpaid should that amount not be withheld from the purchase price of the business. It is advisable that anyone interested in acquiring an on-going business secure the services of an attorney for maximum protection against any possible unseen liability.

### Mixing Personal Purchases with Business Expenses

Department auditors are finding more often the case

where dealers are using personal credit cards to pay for both business purchases and personal purchases. Whenever a business pays for credit card purchases, ***whether for personal credit cards or business credit cards***, they are taxable and become subject to review by a field auditor. Personal use items are not exempt from the review process, especially when personal use items are purchased under exempt circumstances like the presentation of a Resale Exemption Certificate. Therefore, any dealer who engages in the practice of making personal purchases exempt from the local sales tax under business practices should be prepared to pay tax, penalty and interest when such items are discovered during a routine audit.

### Local Resale Exemption Certificates--Revisited

Effective November 1, 2009, our office discontinued the issuance of local "Resale" exemption certificates. We will, however, continue to provide other appropriate exemption certificates as requested by our local dealers. In light of the procedures put in place by the LA Department of Revenue concerning these resale certificates, we've determined that our local resale exemption certificate will no longer be required. Vendors may rely upon the state resale exemption certificate providing they furnish them with a copy of Form R-1064 or R-1067. This will satisfy local needs as well. Vendors may visit the Department of Revenue's website and investigate whether a dealer has been issued one of these

certificates. The website is [www.rev.state.la.us](http://www.rev.state.la.us).

### Online Filing – A HIT!

Taxpayers continue to register for online filing. We are now averaging over 1,600 online filers a month. Again, our website for forms, publications, and instructions for filing returns is [www.calcasieusalestax.org](http://www.calcasieusalestax.org). Filing online is a 100% free service. The only cost to taxpayers is the time it takes for registration.



### Hotel Accommodations for Federal Employees

The Louisiana Department of Revenue has recently issued Revenue Information Bulletin 10-012. The information provides that, in order for a federal employee to garner the exemption available for lodging services while traveling on official business, they must provide documentation certifying the tax exclusion in one of two ways:

1. Copy of travel orders or
2. An exemption certificate signed by the employee AND a government agent other than the employee.

The Revenue Information Bulletin may be accessed at [www.rev.state.la.us](http://www.rev.state.la.us) for further details.