



State of Tennessee

Justin P. Wilson, State Comptroller

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More Than \$500,000 Stolen From County Governments in Tennessee Remains Uncollected

In the 2012 Report of Cash Shortages, auditors found that \$563,372.50 of funds stolen from county governments, some dating back several years, had not been recovered. Details about the missing money can be found in the report, which was released today.

The news in the report wasn't all bad: For the reporting period, auditors reported new thefts of \$106,495.27 – down from \$213,635.66 the year before. And - thanks to the recovery of \$279,817.21 last year - the statewide balance of uncollected funds dropped from \$736,694.44 cited in last year's report to \$563,372.50 in this year's report.

Information about cash shortages is collected from the annual financial reports and special reports for the state's 89 counties audited by the Comptroller's Division of Local Government Audit and the six counties audited by private accounting firms.

In addition to a county-by-county breakdown of cash shortages, the report also provides explanations of how the shortages were detected, how the money was stolen, corrective steps taken by counties and legal actions taken against those responsible for the thefts.

“While it is good to see that the number of new thefts was down last year and a substantial amount of money was recovered, there's absolutely no reason to be complacent about these statistics,” Comptroller Justin P. Wilson said. “It's important for our local government officials to constantly remain on guard against the potential theft of taxpayer money. That means they need to have good checks and balances – what our auditors refer to as ‘internal controls’ – in their procedures for how money is collected, recorded, deposited and spent. If adequate safeguards aren't in place, the amount of stolen money identified in future cash shortage reports is likely to rise.”

To view the report online, go to:

<http://comptroller.tn.gov/repository/CA/2012/2012%20Cash%20Shortage%20Report.pdf>

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