



State of Tennessee

Justin P. Wilson, State Comptroller

For Immediate Release: June 19, 2014

Three Quarters of a Million Dollars' Worth of Stolen Public Money Remains Uncollected

Although county officials across Tennessee have made strides in recovering money stolen from public coffers, \$775,221.12 remained uncollected at the end of the last fiscal year.

That was one of the key findings of the 2013 Report of Cash Shortages, which was released today by the state Comptroller's office.

Each year, the Comptroller's office prepares the report detailing the status of money stolen from county governments in Tennessee. The report includes information compiled from annual financial reports for the 89 counties audited by the Comptroller's office and six counties audited by private accounting firms, as well as investigations and special reports issued by the Comptroller's office.

The new report provides a snapshot of each county's cash shortages as of June 30, 2013. There is information in the report not only about money stolen during the year, but also in previous fiscal years that remains unrecovered.

The state's 95 counties began the last fiscal year with \$563,372.50 in cash shortages that had not been recovered. During the year, \$449,624.04 worth of new shortages was detected. Counties were able to recover \$237,775.42 through restitution payments, insurance claims or other means. That left a net unrecovered shortage of \$775,221.12 at the end of the fiscal year.

"While it's encouraging that county officials have been able to recover substantial amounts of the money that has been taken from them, it's discouraging that the amount of new thefts discovered in the fiscal year outpaces the recovered amounts," Comptroller Justin P. Wilson said. "I hope people will read through this report and realize how widespread the theft of public funds is in our state. I urge local government officials to follow the steps recommended by our auditors to safeguard against the fraud, waste and abuse of public money."

In addition to a county-by-county breakdown of the cash shortages, the report also provides explanations of how the shortages were discovered, methods used to steal the money, corrective steps taken by counties to prevent future thefts and legal actions taken against those responsible for the thefts.

To view the report online, go to: <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/repository/CA/2013/2013CashShortageReport.pdf>.

If you suspect fraud, waste or abuse of public money in Tennessee, call the Comptroller's toll-free hotline at 1-800-232-5454 or file a report online at: <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/shared/safwa.asp>.

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Media contact: Blake Fontenay, Communications Director, (615) 253-2668 or blake.fontenay@tn.gov

[Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury](http://www.comptroller.tn.gov)
State Capitol Nashville, TN 37243
Phone: (615) 741-2501
Email: comptroller.web@cot.tn.gov