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Company director and ex-wife jailed for tax fraud

The director of a fire safety and security firm and his ex-wife, have been jailed for a total of six years and nine months for stealing £815,000 tax, National Insurance and VAT after they were investigated by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

The two-pronged attack on the tax system saw Donna Howard (43), steal £283,713 in Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions (NIC) from the unsuspecting employees of her former husband's business, Motherwell based MDH Fire and Security Services Limited.

The HMRC investigation also revealed that over a three year period the Howards were guilty of charging customers more than £530,000 in VAT using fictitious and de-registered VAT numbers but kept the money. Donna gave the frauds a veneer of legitimacy by creating false payslips and paperwork. Investigators found that instead of paying the tax, the money was used to fund Michael and Donna's lifestyles. The couple shared a £400,000 house in Motherwell and enjoyed luxurious trips abroad.

Action to recover the evaded taxes is now underway.

Notes for editors

1. Michael Howard (DOB 04/09/72) from Kingsacre Road, Glasgow, was found guilty at a trial in Hamilton Sheriff Court Sherriff Court in February to being knowingly concerned in the fraudulent evasion of Value Added Tax contrary to section 72(1) of the 1994 Value Added Tax act. He was sentenced to three years in prison on Thursday 16 March 2017 at the same court.

2. Donna Howard (DOB 16/06/1973) from Snead View, Motherwell, was found guilty at a trial in Hamilton Sheriff Court Sherriff Court in February to being knowingly concerned in the fraudulent evasion of Value Added Tax contrary to section 72(1) of the 1994 Value Added Tax act. She was also found guilty of the fraudulent evasion of Income tax and National Insurance deductions. On Thursday 16 March 2017 at the same court she received a three year prison sentence for VAT fraud and two nine month concurrent sentences for to the other offences.

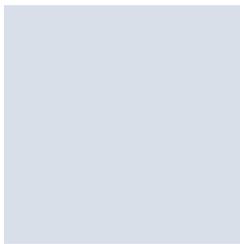
3. Follow HMRC's Press Office on Twitter @HMRCpressoffice

Issued by HM Revenue & Customs Press Office

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) is the UK's tax authority.

HMRC is responsible for making sure that the money is available to fund the UK's public services and for helping families and individuals with targeted financial support.

Contacts



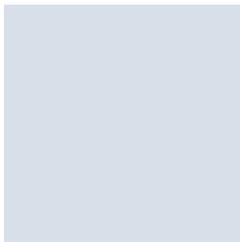
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