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Response From Jackson Hewitt

Editor's Note: The following is the full text of a letter from Jackson Hewitt franchise operator Barbara Hirsch, President of Crescent City Tax Service Inc.:

Jackson Hewitt first became aware that it had been the victim of a theft of certain items, including tax returns, last weekend, when we returned a phone call to a WDSU-TV reporter. I expressed my shock and how upset I was that files were found improperly discarded. I asked if I could come and review the items so that I could begin a proper investigation.

After a very brief review of the documents in Mr. Angelico's office, we were able to determine that these items had been unlawfully removed from our office in Kenner, Louisiana. We subsequently called the Kenner Police to report the incident. We are currently in the process of identifying the returns that are not in our possession and will be contacting each affected customer to discuss any issues that may arise out of this incident.

We take customer service and privacy very seriously and take great care in the storage and disposal of personal and tax documents. All of our prior and current year files are stored under lock and key. Documents that are due to be disposed of because the legal holding period has expired are always disposed of through a professional paper shredding service. These documents are shredded on-site by the service at our office with at least one Jackson Hewitt employee as witness.

We are confident that the items that were turned over to WDSU were taken unlawfully, as clearly our disposal procedures would not have allowed for this to happen otherwise. It is important to note that other proprietary items, including office supplies and my company's current banking information were also found among the tax returns. While we respect the news media's right to investigate legitimate stories, we oppose incomplete investigations and sensationalism designed to cast undeserved aspersions on upstanding members of the business community.

Barbara Hirsch
President
Crescent City Tax Service, Inc.
d/b/a Jackson Hewitt Tax Service

