

For Immediate Release
Thursday, July 22, 2010

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IOWA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND LAND STEWARDSHIP

DES MOINES – A computer and protective case has been stolen from a locked state vehicle of an Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship employee. This theft has placed at risk the personal information of Iowans that are participating in the Department’s Horse and Dog Breeding Program. Through this program the Department provides financial awards to breeders of successful Iowa born racing greyhounds and racehorses at the close of each racing season.

On Thursday, July 22, the state vehicle used by an employee of the Department’s Horse and Dog Breeding Program was broken into in the State of Iowa parking ramp at the corner of Grand Avenue and Pennsylvania in Des Moines. While the computer did have an encryption protection, there is concern that unauthorized access could be gained to the names, address, phone number and social security number of 3,404 Iowans who participate in the Iowa Horse and Dog Breeding Program.

As a result of this security breach, the Department is encouraging potentially affected Iowans to place a fraud victim alert on your credit report by contacting the following credit reporting companies. A letter will be mailed tomorrow to all those potentially affected.

Equifax
P.O. Box 740241
Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
800-525-6285
www.equifax.com

Experian
P.O. Box 9532
Allen, TX 75013
888-397-3742
www.experian.com

TransUnion
P.O. Box 6790
Fullerton, CA 92834-6790
800-680-7289
www.transunion.com

In addition, Iowans can obtain a free annual copy of your credit report by visiting www.annualcreditreport.com, or calling toll-free 1-877-322-8228.

The Department is working with the Iowa Department of Public Safety to investigate the incident and find the stolen laptop.

“The Department takes our responsibility very seriously to protect the personal information of Iowans who utilize our programs,” said Bill Northey, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture. “We are moving as quickly and aggressively as possible to retrieve this information and reach out to potentially affected Iowans so they can step-up their efforts to protect their personal information.”

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