



SAN DIEGO CITY ATTORNEY JAN I. GOLDSMITH

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 27, 2009

Contact: Gina Coburn, Communications Director (619) 533-6181

San Diego City Attorney's Office Prosecutes Company for Phony Government Property Tax Appeal Bill

San Diego, CA: The San Diego City Attorney's Office has charged the owners of *California Tax Reassessment* with 96 counts of false and misleading advertising stemming from a mailer used by the company to solicit property tax reassessment fees. Michael Willey and Eric Torres, co-owners of *California Tax Reassessment* are accused of unlawfully using what appears to be an invoice from the government to get homeowners to pay their company to perform a service that can be done for free.

The company's mailer informs homeowners that "no record of your Reassessment Application" was received, and the homeowner must pay a \$186 "processing fee" to complete the reassessment plus a \$67 "late fee" if the application is received after the due date.

Property tax reassessment is a free service provided by the county tax assessor's office. If a homeowner believes his or her property value has fallen below its assessed value, the homeowner can file an assessment appeal with the San Diego County Assessor's Office and they will review the property's value to determine if it should be lowered.

The City Attorney's Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit received complaints shortly after *California Tax Reassessment* began sending mailers to homeowners in the fall of 2008. The San Diego County Assessor's Office also received a number of complaints from recipients of the mailer.

San Diego homeowners can get more information on filing a property tax assessment appeal by contacting the San Diego County Assessor's Office at (858) 505-6262 or www.sdarcc.com.

Homeowners in San Diego who believe they are a victim of *California Tax Reassessment* should contact the City Attorney's Consumer Help Line at (619) 533-5600.

###