

November 14, 2013

CEASE & DESIST ORDER ISSUED AGAINST BOGUS “UNION LABOR GUIDE” - Investigators determine Andrew Austin Shaw of Wisconsin was operating a “business invoice” scam in ND

BISMARCK, ND – Andrew Austin Shaw of Wisconsin, doing business as Union Labor Guide, Dakota Union Labor Guide, Saint Louis Union Labor Guide, LLC, and Wisconsin Union Labor Guide, has been banned from doing business in North Dakota after consumer fraud investigators determined he was engaging in deceptive practices.

After receiving reports from several businesses that they had received invoices for advertising services they had not ordered, Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem directed the consumer protection division initiate an investigation. The investigators determined that Shaw, who also goes by Andrew (or Andy) Austin, and his companies had mailed unsolicited invoices to businesses in North Dakota, claiming the business owed \$175 for supposed advertisements in trade publications.

“The success of Shaw’s scam depended in part on his use of words that have a valid purpose. Scam artists often create phony businesses with names similar to legitimate enterprises because it makes it harder for the consumer to identify the phony businesses,” said Stenehjem.

Numerous North Dakota businesses had made payment on the phony invoices from Union Labor Guide several times over the course of more than a year before realizing they had never ordered or authorized any such advertising.

Stenehjem urged North Dakota businesses to verify that there is a corresponding original order before authorizing payment on an invoice.

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