

December 11, 2009

FORTUNE HI-TECH MARKETING ORDERED TO STOP DOING BUSINESS IN NORTH DAKOTA

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem has issued a Cease & Desist Order against Fortune Hi-Tech Marketing of Lexington, KY and its principals Paul C. Oberson, Jeff Oberson, and Thomas A. Mills for violations of North Dakota transient merchant, consumer fraud, and home solicitation sales laws. The Order was filed late yesterday, December 10, 2009.

Fortune Hi-Tech Marketing claims to offer consumers a “business and compensation plan designed to yield income through network marketing.” According to Stenehjem Fortune Hi-Tech continued its business activities in North Dakota even after being told it could not do so without the required Transient Merchant license. “This business blatantly disregarded our effort to ensure compliance with North Dakota law,” Stenehjem said. “This is not the typical response from a legitimate company and its actions must have consequences.”

The Consumer Protection Division is reviewing Fortune Hi-Tech’s activities and it appears there also may be violations of the consumer fraud and home solicitation sales laws. “I’m concerned about this assortment of violations,” said Stenehjem. Stenehjem has requested information about the extent of the company’s business transactions in North Dakota including dates of transactions, customers, and payments received.

In addition to these violations, Stenehjem asked the Consumer Protection Division to review whether this company is engaged in any violations of North Dakota’s pyramid law. North Dakota law prohibits promotional pyramid schemes in which the participant pays for the opportunity to receive income primarily from the recruitment of other participants rather than the sale of goods or services.

According to Stenehjem there certainly are legitimate network marketing companies, but consumers should be wary of any compensation plans that appear to emphasize recruitment of other participants, as opposed to sales of legitimate products or services. “We are skeptical of these claims to “make money while you sleep.” Stenehjem said.

North Dakota consumers with questions or complaints about Fortune Hi-Tech Marketing should contact the Consumer Protection Division toll-free at 1-800-472-2600.

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