



Commerce Department Overview

[MN.gov/Commerce](https://mn.gov/Commerce)

What does Commerce do?

Protect all Minnesotans
in their everyday financial transactions by
investigating and evaluating services, and
advocating that the services
be fair, accessible, and affordable.

Leadership team

- Temporary Commissioner Grace Arnold
- Chief Deputy Commissioner Anne O'Connor
- Energy Resources - Deputy Commissioner Aditya Ranade
- Energy Resources - Asst Commissioner Katherine Blauvelt
- Financial Institutions - Deputy Commissioner Max Zappia
- Insurance – Deputy Commissioner Grace Arnold
- Gov't Affairs & External Relations - Assistant Commissioner Peter Brickwedde
- Enforcement - Assistant Commissioner Matt Vatter

What are Commerce's services?

Protecting all Minnesotans in their everyday financial transactions in these areas

Financial
Institutions

Insurance

Energy
Resources

Unclaimed
Property

Enforcement

Telecommunications

Licensing

Senior financial fraud

Petrofund

Weights &
Measures

Consumer
Service Center

CONSUMERS

BUSINESS



Commerce
Department

- Provide consumer protection and assistance
- Conduct investigations of suspected insurance-related fraud and financial fraud against seniors and vulnerable adults
- Examine financial institutions, insurance and other financial transaction services for safety and soundness
- License over 250,000 professionals and businesses
- Advocate for the public interest before energy-related regulatory bodies
- Deliver federal and state energy and telecommunications programs

Where would you see Commerce?

With You Every Day

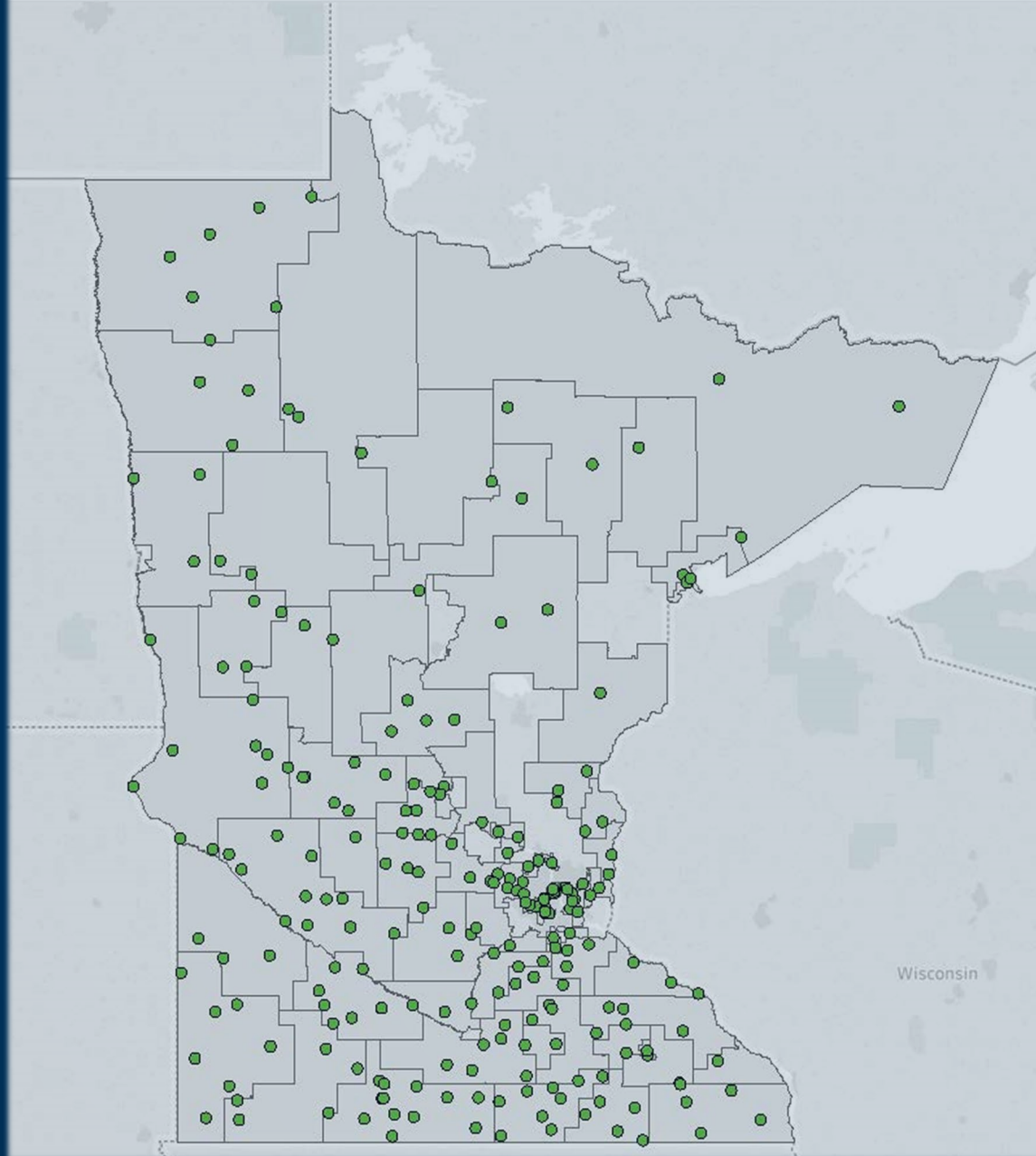
Wherever you are in Minnesota ...

Filling up
on gas

Purchasing a
home

Rebuilding
after a
disaster

Working to
reduce
energy
consumption



Statewide Reach

Commerce services and programs reach across the state in many different ways

Commerce programs with regional staff or partners include:

- Financial Institutions
- Energy Assistance Program
- Weights & Measures
- Licensing

Commerce protects consumers *by investigating* reports of financial exploitation or fraud against seniors and vulnerable adults

Does my
granddaughter
really need
\$1,000 wired
to her?

Does that
guy who works
on an oil rig
really love me?

Did I win
the lottery?

Senior Financial Fraud Protection



Scams targeting seniors are increasing

Senior financial exploitation trends:

- COVID-19 - the “perfect storm” for seniors to be victims of fraud
- Family member/trusted source scams
- Social media/email scams
- Telephone scams

Martin Fleischhacker Senior Financial Fraud Ombudsman

Commerce's role in the
Safe Senior Financial
Protection Act

- Advocated for new law
- Investigate senior fraud
- Prevent senior fraud



Financial Institutions

Ensure the safety and solvency of Minnesota's banks, credit unions and other financial institutions in order to protect consumers and promote a fair and competitive marketplace

Securities

Dept of Commerce registers, examines and regulates:

- 433 Investment Advisers, nearly 10,000 Investment Adviser Representatives, and many other securities entities and products
- Investment Advisors manage \$9.5 billion of Minnesotans' money in more than 51,000 accounts

Financial Institutions

Banks, Credit Unions and Non-depository Financial Institutions

Dept of Commerce licenses, examines and regulates:

- 219 state-chartered banks totaling \$53 billion in assets and \$45 billion in deposits
- 69 credit unions totaling \$20 billion in assets, including \$4.7 billion in recent conversions to a state charter
- 1,500 non-depository financial institutions, 2,500 branches, and more than 10,000 non-depository individual licensees
- Minnesota-regulated mortgage companies generated more than \$23 billion in mortgages in 2020 and serviced \$90 billion in mortgages

Mark Hastie | Director Non-Depository Financial Institutions

Commerce leadership in
national associations
provides:

- Efficiency
- Best practices
- Multi-state coordination



Insurance

- Examine, analyze, and license insurance carriers to ensure safety and claims-paying ability
- Review form and rate filings to ensure that product offerings are fair and reasonable

Insurance lines with Commerce oversight:

- Health
- Homeowners
- Auto
- Life
- Long-term care
- Worker's compensation

Insurance

- Administer and oversee Minnesota's reinsurance program in health insurance
- License pharmacy benefit managers and oversees business practices
- Collaborate with other state agencies and stakeholders to identify new health policy options and solutions for consumers
- Through providers of last resort, help to ensure coverage for Minnesotans that otherwise cannot purchase it
- Monitor markets and make policy recommendations to maintain market health and stability

Enforcement

Four enforcement functions:

**Consumer
Service
Center**

**Civil
Investigations**

**Criminal
Investigations**

**Market
conduct
examinations**

- Work to create a fair marketplace and encourage responsible business conduct
- Oversee a broad range of licensed occupations
- Respond to questions and complaints by consumers and other sources

Enforcement

Consumer Service Center

- Provides services to consumers who have inquires or complaints about Commerce-regulated industries and licensees
- In 2020, responded to 11,398 calls to Enforcement, including 9,157 to the Consumer Service Center

Civil Enforcement

- Real estate, mortgage, title
- Multi-industry
- Insurance enforcement
- Securities enforcement

Jacqueline Olson Audit Director Multi-industry Team

Commerce Enforcement goals:

- Marketplace fairness
- Protection
- Education
- Prevention



Enforcement

Commerce Fraud Bureau

- Initiated insurance-related investigations into 3,600 cases in 2020
- In 2019, criminal investigations resulted in prosecutions with economic impact totaling \$29,252,961
- Example: Auto insurance fraud

Market Conduct Examinations

- Formal review of company policies and practices
- Exams may result from civil investigations in which there are numerous, habitual investigations of a single company

Weights & Measures

State's first consumer protection unit established in 1885

- Ensure consumers get what they pay for and not overpay for gas, groceries
- Ensure businesses receive accurate price per volume sold
- Provide accredited metrology calibration services to 229 companies and government agencies
- Test fuel samples and inspect commercial and measuring devices for accuracy and correctness at 10,730 gas stations, grocery stores, bulk plants, grain elevators, mines, terminals, airports and other businesses



Licensing

- License over a quarter million professionals to do business in Minnesota
- Administer more than two dozen license types in:
 - Insurance
 - Real estate
 - Real property appraisal
 - Debt collection
- Approve about 2,000 continuing education courses each year

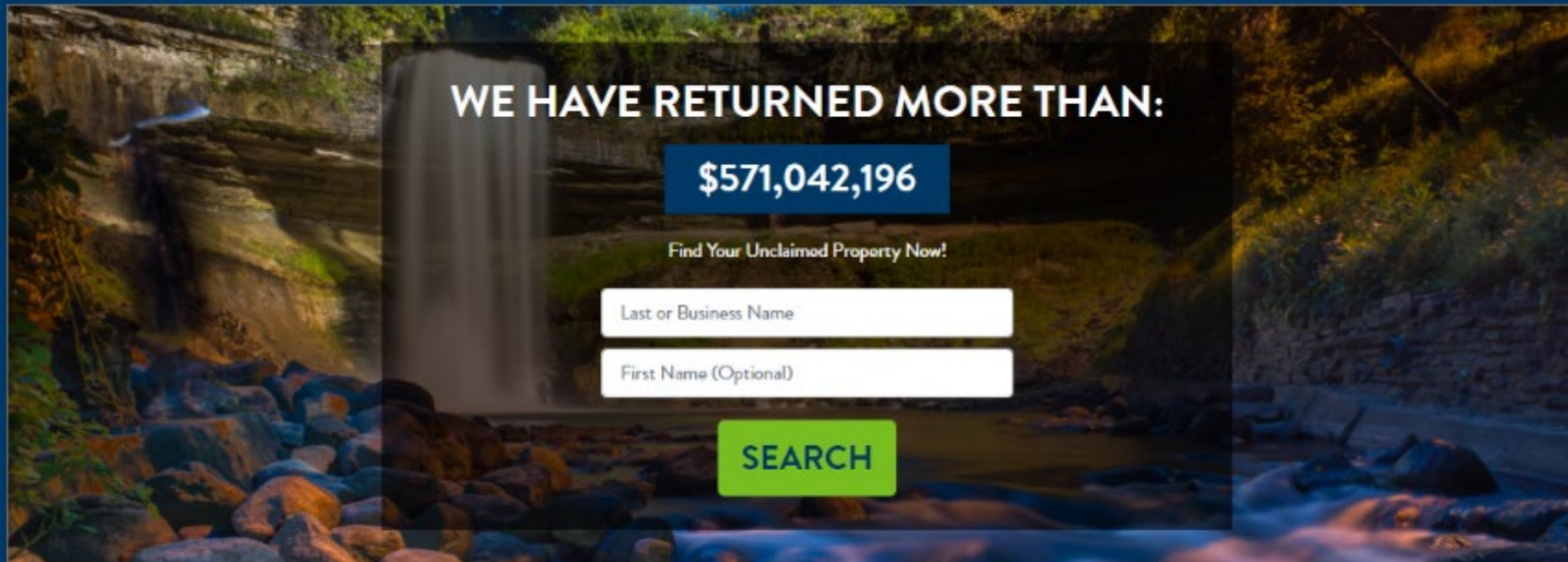
Unclaimed Property



CLAIMING
PROPERTY

REPORTING
PROPERTY

ABOUT



Welcome to the Minnesota Unclaimed Property

Welcome to the Minnesota Unclaimed Property Website. One of our office's top priorities is reuniting the owners with their lost or misplaced property. This includes items such as bank accounts, contents of safe deposit boxes, wages, insurance benefits, security deposits, stock dividends and other funds that remain unclaimed for three years or more.

Website: [Unclaimed property / MN.gov](https://unclaimedproperty.mn.gov)

Telecommunications

- Advocate for Minnesota consumers and the public interest before telecommunications regulatory bodies and enforces landline, voice service telecommunications regulations
- Work with individual consumers and advocacy groups in identifying unmet needs/consumer protection issues and identifying potential solutions
- Administer the Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM) program
 - TAM provides Minnesota Relay, which allows individuals who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or speech disabled to place and receive telephone calls

Energy Resources

- Promote clean, reliable and affordable energy for Minnesota businesses and homes
- Advocate on behalf of consumers and ratepayers in proceedings involving regulated utilities
- Maintain state emergency energy planning and recovery plans
- Oversee the Conservation Improvement Program operated by 180 utilities
- Promote energy-efficient buildings and modern energy technologies
- Administer the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance and Weatherization Assistance Programs

Petrofund

- Manage the state's program for providing assistance to address leaking petroleum storage tanks
- 13,300 = Number of leak sites addressed since 1987
- \$460 million = Approximate number of reimbursements paid out to eligible applicants since 1987
- Over 550 = Abandoned underground petroleum storage tanks removed from approximately 360 properties since 2004

COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Commerce's consumer advocacy

- Worked with state-regulated fully insured health plans to waive co-pays and deductibles for COVID-19 testing and treatments
- Worked with our state-chartered banks and credit unions to instill continued consumer trust in the safety of funds held in financial institutions to prevent a widespread bank run with the uncertainty at the beginning of the pandemic
- Worked with the state's utilities to get a voluntary pause on shutoffs, ensuring families have reliable power and heat while they are asked to stay home to combat the pandemic
- Worked with the Legislature on authority to extend regulatory guidelines and provide relief to our industries



Who can you contact ...

...about a consumer complaint,
question or concern?

Department of Commerce
Consumer Service Center
651-539-1600

mn.gov/commerce/consumers/file-a-complaint

Commerce Government Affairs

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Director, Government Affairs

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