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**CLIENT ALERT**

***DISCLOSURE OF TAX RETURN INFORMATION***

Effective January 1, 2009, the Internal Revenue Service will require tax preparers to obtain a signed and dated written consent to disclose or use any tax return information or give copies of tax returns to anyone other than for the purpose of preparing the tax return. The consent must be received in advance and contain detailed mandatory information.

Failure of a tax return preparer to comply with the new use and disclosure rules can result in “criminal penalties.” If the tax return preparer “knowingly and recklessly” violates the new rules it is considered a “misdemeanor” with a maximum penalty of up to one year in jail or a fine of \$1,000 or both. The Internal Revenue Service as an alternative can pursue civil penalties of \$250 for each unauthorized disclosure or use, up to \$10,000.

We have always maintained a strict confidentiality policy. In the past, we only used your information to prepare your tax return or provide you with requested assistance and only disclosed information or provided copies of returns after approval by our clients with either written or verbal authorization. However, to avoid unintentional violation of these new disclosure rules, effective January 1, 2009, we will ***not*** provide copies of tax returns or tax return information to anyone other than our client. Consequently, clients should take extra care to maintain their copy of the tax returns we provide at the time the returns are prepared. In addition, we will ***not*** provide any tax information to anyone including banks, mortgage companies, financial advisors, brokers, etc.

If it is absolutely imperative, at your request, that we do make disclosures on your behalf, because of the time and record keeping responsibilities, a fee paid in advance, will be required along with the signed and dated written consent as required by the Internal Revenue Service.

Additional information regarding the above can be found on the Internal Revenue Service website @ [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) then typing Section 7216 or Section 6713 in the “keyword/search” area.

**December 29, 2008**

***Disclaimer: This e-mail represents a general overview of tax developments and should not be relied upon without an independent, professional analysis of how any of these provisions may apply to a specific situation. Any tax information contained in the body of this e-mail was not intended or written to be used, and cannot be used, by the recipient for the purpose of avoiding penalties that may be imposed under the Internal Revenue Code or applicable state or local tax law provisions.***