

LIMITED REVIEW FINDINGS PRESS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UTAH STATE AUDITOR
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TINA M. CANNON
UTAH STATE AUDITOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Utah State Auditor Hotline Leads to Discovery of \$188,000 in Missing Iron County Building Permit Funds

Salt Lake City, Utah – The Office of the Utah State Auditor (Office) today announced the results of a limited review of Iron County’s cash receipting processes. The review was initiated after the Office received a whistleblower hotline complaint alleging that cash building permit fees in Iron County had been misappropriated.

The Office’s hotline program is a vital safeguard for Utah taxpayers, giving whistleblowers a safe and independent channel to raise concerns about government activity. In this case, the information provided through the hotline allowed the State Auditor’s Office to coordinate with the Iron County Auditor, share additional details, and prompt further review. **That follow-up ultimately identified approximately \$188,000 in missing cash building permit payments dating back to 2018.**

“Credit goes to the whistleblower who had the courage to contact our office,” said Utah State Auditor Tina M. Cannon. “With that information, our Office was able to initiate our limited review, bring additional facts to light, and ensure proper safeguards were implemented going forward. Our role is not only to identify weaknesses, but also to help counties and cities strengthen their systems so public money is protected.”

The limited review also found broader weaknesses in county cash receipting practices that, if unaddressed, could expose other departments to similar risks. The report includes recommendations to improve reconciliation procedures, strengthen controls over mailed payments, and ensure timely deposits in accordance with Utah law.

Auditor Cannon emphasized that the State Auditor's Office brings specialized expertise in assessing risks in financial processes and advising on internal controls which complements the efforts of local officials, "Strong internal controls and timely, thorough reviews are essential for every public entity. Our Office stands ready to support counties and cities in improving their oversight and building the processes needed to safeguard taxpayer dollars and maintain public trust."

The Office of the State Auditor looks forward to working in coordination with the Iron County Auditor to share lessons learned and provide training opportunities for other entities to ensure proper internal controls are in place and the taxpayer's money is protected.

The full report, including detailed findings and recommendations, is available on the Office of the Utah State Auditor's website at

<https://reporting.auditor.utah.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=015Do0000017n55IAA>.

About the Office of the Utah State Auditor:

The Office of the Utah State Auditor provides Utah taxpayers and government officials with an independent assessment of financial operations, statutory compliance, and performance management, including the development of Transparent.Utah.Gov, for state and local government. The State Auditor is a Constitutional Officer of the Executive Branch of government for the State of Utah. Learn more about the Office of the Utah State Auditor at auditor.utah.gov.

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