

PLANTS, DÉCOR AND FURNITURE AMONG THE ITEMS OFFICE WORKERS ADMIT TO STEALING, NEW SURVEY FINDS

New Survey Commissioned by Leading Lawyer Directory LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell's lawyers.com Reveals Prevalence of Office Theft

May 1, 2006, New York, New York – Employers might want to lock up the supply cabinet before leaving the office if they want to find it stocked when they return.

Turns out the majority of office workers (58%) have taken office supplies for their personal use, according to a new survey conducted by Harris Interactive® and commissioned by LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell's [<http://www.martindale.com>] lawyers.com [<http://www.lawyers.com>], the most comprehensive and trustworthy online resource for finding lawyers.

Among those who admit to taking office supplies for personal use, the most commonly stolen office supplies include pens/pencils (77%), followed by self-adhesive “sticky” notes (44%) and paper clips (40%). Some employees (2%) are even taking decorations like plants, paintings and office furniture (2%).

“People often forget that workplace resources are not their own and are actually considered company property,” said attorney Alan Kopit, legal editor of lawyers.com [<http://www.lawyers.com>]. “We are not just talking about pens and paper here, employees are also stealing expensive things too like computers, software and books.

“Americans should be aware that they are putting themselves at potential risk of termination and could possibly face legal consequences.” Kopit suggests employees review their office policy and be sure to alter their behavior to abide by the regulations.

Employee theft costs small businesses billions of dollars a year, because in addition to pens and paper, employees are also stealing resources directly related to the productivity of the business, like classified information, patents, corporate contacts, case studies, and periodicals. “Business owners need to evaluate the current policies and employee practices and if necessary institute new systems to eliminate the risk to the business,” said Kopit.

For more information about the implications of office theft, consult an attorney or visit www.lawyers.com.

About the Survey

Harris Interactive® fielded the online survey on behalf of Lawyers.com between March 31 and April 4, 2006 among a nationwide sample of 2,364 U.S. adults 18 years of age or older. The data were weighted to be representative of the total U.S. adult population on the basis of region, age within gender, education, household income, race/ethnicity and propensity to be online. In theory, with a probability sample of this size, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results for the

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overall sample of adults have a sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. Sampling error for the sub-samples of current and previous office workers (1,652) and office workers who

have taken office supplies for personal use (1,000) is higher and varies. This online sample is not a probability sample.

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