



PUBLIC GUARDIAN  
AND TRUSTEE OF  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

700 – 808 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6C 3L3 • Phone: (604) 660-4444 • Fax: (604) 660-0374  
[www.trustee.bc.ca](http://www.trustee.bc.ca)

**For immediate release  
August 20, 2007**

**Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia reports alleged breach of trust  
by former temporary employee**

***RCMP arrests former employee, independent accountant leading full investigation***

**Vancouver** – The RCMP has arrested a former temporary employee of the Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia on charges of breach of trust. The Public Guardian and Trustee notified the RCMP when it first identified potentially fraudulent activity early this month.

An independent forensic accountant is assisting the Public Guardian and Trustee by leading a systematic investigation of all files handled by the former employee. At this early stage of the investigation, issues have been identified in 11 client accounts. The individual handled less than one percent of the Public Guardian and Trustee's client files. "Any fraudulent activity is abhorrent and we are outraged that this person may have violated the trust that British Columbians place in our office" said Jay Chalke, QC, Public Guardian and Trustee. "The individual has been apprehended by the authorities and we are fully committed to continuing our internal investigation and taking all possible steps to protect client assets."

The former employee worked at the Public Guardian and Trustee for less than a year and was no longer employed by the organization at the time of arrest. To date, the Public Guardian and Trustee has provided the RCMP with copies of client wills, petty cash reports, credit card bills and land title transfers to be reviewed as part of its investigation. The organization has every reason to believe that the alleged incidents were carried out by this individual without the assistance of others at the Public Guardian and Trustee.

The Public Guardian and Trustee also took steps to protect client assets by applying to the Supreme Court of British Columbia. The Court appointed an independent receiver to secure any affected client funds held by the former temporary employee. At this stage of the investigation, the vast majority of client funds have been found and they are being held by the receiver until further order from the Court.

Clients and families who have been potentially affected by this issue will be notified directly. As this matter has been handed over to the RCMP, the Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia cannot provide additional details at this time, but anticipates that more

information will be available pending the results of the investigation.

Concerned clients and family members can contact a special response line at the Public Guardian and Trustee at 604-660-3200, if calling from outside the Lower Mainland callers may phone collect, or by emailing [responseline@trustee.bc.ca](mailto:responseline@trustee.bc.ca).

**About the Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia:**

The Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia provides services to approximately 27,000 clients and manages more than \$600 million in trust assets. Its mandate is to serve:

- Children and youth under the age of 19 by protecting their legal and financial interests;
- Adults who require assistance in decision-making through the protection of their legal rights, financial interests and personal care interests;
- Heirs and beneficiaries of deceased persons when there is no one willing or able to administer their estates; the estates of missing persons; and the beneficiaries of personal trusts.

- 30 -

**For media inquiries, please contact:**

Indiana Matters  
Tel: 604-660-4484