

KHOU.com HOUSTON, TEXAS

Search: Find stories, photos and video

Houston, TX | Radars | Interactive Radars | Conditions

86° Scattered Clouds

Home News Weather Traffic Entertainment Events Sports Video Community Marketplace YouNews Great Day Login

Local Texas National World Crime I-Team Health Politics Business Neighborhood Slideshows Texas Tribune News Links Obits Bush Library

Texas News

DOJ seeks \$10M in damages from Austin debt-relief company



by KGW reporter Chris Willis

khoul.com
Posted on July 18, 2013 at 7:42 PM
Updated today at 10:16 AM

SALEM -- More than 400 Oregonians have fallen victim to an Austin debt-relief company. Now the Oregon Attorney General is seeking damages against World Law Debt, and hoping to ban the company from ever doing business in Oregon again.

"These were just fraudulent business practices," said Jeff Manning of the Oregon Department of Justice. "We can't stand for this."

World Law Debt is an Austin, Texas based company that uses many different business names including: Swift Rock Financial, Inc., Orion Processing, LLC, and World Law Debt Settlement. It promises cash-strapped consumers, including many seniors, that they will help pay their credit card debt, mortgage debt and other debt by negotiating directly with creditors.

But first, consumers must set up an escrow account with their own money. It's money that some consumers said goes to World Law Debt, instead of their creditors as promised.

"They never talked to any of my creditors" said Hope Jentis, a hazelnut farmer who fell behind on a couple of her credit cards. "Normally, I pay off my credit cards every month, but I was late on two payments. I panicked. I've got to do something, you know?"

Jentis fell on hard financial times because a plant disease wiped out nearly half of her hazelnut trees and subsequently, half of her income. So Jentis called World Law Debt, which promised to be with her "every step of the way" during her debt relief.

"They said they would negotiate with creditors, and I would end up paying a third of what I actually, of what they said I owed them," she said.

The Department of Justice is seeking \$10 million in damages and restitution for every Oregon victim. In addition, they also want to keep World Law Debt from ever doing business in the state again.

"They entered into these agreements to settle consumer debt," said the DOJ's Jeff Manning. "And basically pocketed a lot of their customers money."

Manning said the money is staggering. Four-hundred-twenty-five people gave money to World Law Debt, totaling more than \$1.5 million. Only about \$275,000 went to settlements, and more than \$960,000 was company profit.

KGW's Unit 8 tracked down a former World Law Debt employee in Austin Texas.

The employee, who asked to not be named, said dishonesty was a part of his job.

"(It) definitely felt unethical. Obviously I was kind of part of it," the employee said. "I'm lying. I'm basically lying to the person on the phone, telling them we can still make a plan. We can figure something out knowing in my head that ultimately they're probably going to get sued by one of their creditors."

Late Thursday, Unit 8 was contacted by a representative of World Law Debt in Austin. He threatened an injunction filed in Federal Court to prevent KGW from airing this story.

So, KGW checked the background of the man who called, who identified himself as Randy Lepley. It turns out he is not an attorney.

If you need debt relief, there are many non-profit groups who can help you negotiate with creditors, often times free of charge.

You can get started at consumercredit.com or debtconsolidationcare.com.

And if you have a story you'd like us to investigate, you can contact us at Unit8@kgw.com or call us at (503) 226-5041.

Next article

[Records: Austin 13-year-old raped as men recorded, cheered](#)

From Around the Web

- 10 Cars That Retain Their Value When You Sell in Five Years [TheStreet](#)
- The 25 US Corporations That Pay the Highest Taxes [Forbes](#)
- 22 Gorgeous Patio Ideas [HGTV](#)
- 10 Most Expensive Places to Live in America [Kiplinger](#)
- The 12 Worst Supermarkets in America [The Fiscal Times](#)
- Income in Retirement: The Model has Changed [Vanguard](#)

More From KVUE.com

- Kids react to controversial biracial Cheerios ad
- Travis Co. mother accused of hitting, throwing son
- Austin mother facing child abuse charges
- 2 women share new details on highway body cavity search
- Man arrested for biting the thumb off a convenience store clerk
- Drive-by shooting in Austin nearly kills 5-month-old baby

Recommended by



Records: Austin 13-year-old raped as men recorded, cheered

Comedian Lewis Black takes aim at Texas on 'The Daily Show'

Big fire destroys part of Dallas-area church

[MORE VIDEO](#)

1,038 comments

Warning: <http://invalid.invalid/> is unreachable.

Facebook social plugin

- RSS Feeds
- Special Offers
- Newsletters
- Twitter
- Text Alerts
- Facebook

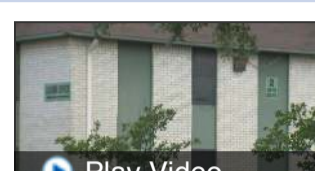
This could be Your Backyard

Call today for summer fun

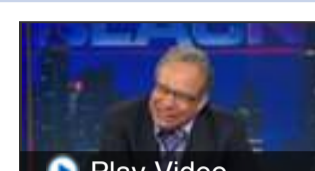
Houston: (281) 870 1600
Beaumont: (409) 898 4995
Victoria: (316) 576 0183

[Learn More](#)

Texas News Video



Records: Austin 13-year-old raped as men recorded, cheered



Comedian Lewis Black takes aim at Texas on 'The Daily Show'



Big fire destroys part of Dallas-area church



Protestors outraged as Perry signs abortion bill into law

[MORE VIDEO](#)

Most Viewed

Most Emailed

- Cop arrested after allegedly assaulting college student from The Woodlands
- Ex-Texas Tech student executed for double slaying
- San Antonio child dies after TV falls on top of him
- Gov. Perry signs sweeping abortion restrictions
- Records: Austin 13-year-old raped as men recorded, cheered

[MORE>>](#)

Events Near You

Today

Tomorrow

Weekend

The Spazmatics

Deer Park - La Porte - Webster - Clear Lk.

Rosehill

Cypress - Hockley

Psychedelic Furs

Downtown



Home News Weather Traffic Entertainment Events Sports Video Community Marketplace YouNews Great Day

khoul.com
713-526-1111 (phone)
713-520-7763 (fax)
assignments@khoul.com

Search: Find stories, photos and video

Contact Us
Employment
Advertising
Terms Of Service
Privacy Policy

© 2009-2013 KHOU-TV, Inc., a subsidiary of Belo Corp. All Rights Reserved.
Powered by Broadcast Interactive Media.