



**For Immediate Release
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MADIGAN SUES INTERNET SERVICES PROVIDER FOR “CRAMMING” SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS' PHONE BILLS

Chicago - Attorney General Lisa Madigan today filed a lawsuit against Integrated Area Services, a Las Vegas-based corporation, for “cramming,” or charging Illinois small businesses on their telephone bills for services that they never ordered or wanted.

Madigan's complaint alleges that Integrated Area Services, doing business as Integrated Area Networks and Integrated Area Internet Access Services, bills Internet access, e-mail, Web site hosting and online listing services to small businesses' phone bills without obtaining authorization or, in certain cases, without providing customers with the promised services. When consumers dispute the charges, the defendant allegedly fails to provide full refunds and often falsely informs customers that someone else at their small business has authorized the charges.

Illinois businesses have already disputed more than 3,500 charges with Integrated Area Services, and the complaint filed today by Attorney General Madigan estimates that the defendant has “crammed” nearly \$65,000 in unauthorized fees onto Illinois businesses' phone bills over the past several years.

“This company is knowingly charging unsuspecting small business owners for services and fees they clearly did not authorize,” Madigan said. “I urge small business owners to thoroughly review their telephone bills for unauthorized charges, and I encourage anyone who feels they may have been victimized by this type of scam to contact our Consumer Fraud Bureau to file a complaint.”

In the complaint filed in Cook County Circuit Court, Madigan asks the court to bar the defendant from conducting business in Illinois and seeks the following penalties: \$50,000 for each violation of the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act and an additional \$50,000 for each violation committed with the intent to defraud.

Assistant Attorneys General Anshuman Vaidya and Michelle Garcia are handling the case for Madigan's Consumer Fraud Bureau.

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