# Agency Collection News

**Wisconsin Department of Revenue**

*"Maximize your collection efforts"*                    *October 2014*

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## Updates

TRIP and SDC programs saw increases in collections in fiscal year 2014 (July 1st to June 30th):

- TRIP increased by $2,916,000 for a total of $87,640,000 collected.
- SDC increased by $2,322,000 for a total of $12,040,000 collected.

There are updated versions of the *My Tax Account* User Guides for SDC and TRIP.

## Agency Profile: Eau Claire County Clerk of Courts

Eau Claire County is located in the northern part of the state with an approximate population of 100,000. The City of Eau Claire, centered on the confluence of the Eau Claire and Chippewa rivers, is the county seat. I recently spoke with Jodi Gobrecht, Chief Deputy of the Fiscal Department, and Kristina Aschenbrenner from the Eau Claire County Clerk of Courts office. We had the opportunity to discuss their agency's participation in the Tax Refund Intercept Program (TRIP).

The Eau Claire County Clerk of Courts is a long time participant in the TRIP program. Both Ms. Gobrecht and Ms. Aschenbrenner mentioned that they see how this program helps save the county money. Before using TRIP, the county would lose money trying to collect debts. Ms. Aschenbrenner provided an example of how this could happen. When an individual is placed in jail due to non-payment of a fine, the fine is reduced for each day the individual is kept in jail. Not only does the court reduce the fine, but the county also incurs the cost of keeping the individual in jail. Often the cost of jailing the individual is more than the amount of the original fine. Many cases like this are avoided by certifying the debt to TRIP instead of jailing the debtor.

What type of debts does Eau Claire County Clerk of Courts certify to TRIP? Ms. Aschebrenner stated they submit filing fees for divorce, fines in criminal cases, and forfeitures for traffic and ordinance violations. Ms. Gobrecht stated that efforts to collect these debts consist of issuing driver's license suspensions and sending notices. Many times they do not get a response and a second notice is sent in the hope that a debtor will pay.

## Agency Profile: Eau Claire County Clerk of Courts (cont'd)

Ms. Aschebrenner and Ms. Godrecht agreed that collecting debts is a lot easier using the TRIP program. It is not labor intensive and the Consolidated Court Automation Programs (CCAP), a software program designed for courts, makes it very easy to use and very streamlined. Ms. Aschebrenner also stated that she uses the TRIP program as a bargaining tool. She finds that informing an individual that their unpaid debt is going to be submitted to TRIP often prompts them to pay.

Since many of the debts are paid using TRIP, Ms. Aschebrenner stated: "Why wouldn't an agency use this program? It is free to use, and with a couple of clicks you can enter the information in the system and spend time receiving money."

By Corban Gehler

**TRIP Highlights**
Eau Claire Count Clerk of Courts

Fiscal year (FY) is July 1st to June 30th

| | |
|---|---|
| FY 2013: | $675,988 |
| FY 2014: | $576,832 |
| **Total:** | $1,252,820 |
| Debt on Roll: | $7,167,277 |
| Debt Count: | 16,623 (July 1,2014) |

## SDC Collection Tools

**What is wage certification and levy?**

- A wage certification is an administrative action that allows DOR to withhold up to 25% of an individual's wages to pay debt (see sec. 71.91(7), Wis. Stats.).

- A levy (usually performed on a bank account) is an order to seize assets held by a third party to pay debt (see sec. 71.91(6), Wis. Stats.).

## SDC & TRIP File Transfer Protocol

SDC and TRIP have options to submit debts using file transfer through a secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) server or through *My Tax Account* (MTA). However, there are a few differences between the SDC and TRIP programs:

**File Formats:**

- SDC uses flat file format (see SDC User Guide).

- TRIP uses an XML file format (see TRIP File Specification).

**File Upload Methods:**

- An agency may upload TRIP files using the FTP server for large file (over 250 entries) or MTA for small file (less than 250 entries). All SDC files are submitted through FTP.

- If an agency would like to use file transfer through FTP for SDC and TRIP, they need a separate Web Access Management System (WAMS) ID for each account. To obtain a WAMS ID, please see our SDC User Guide, Appendix 1.

**Maintaining Platforms**

- DOR uses WAMS ID (for FTP) and MTA logon ID. They are two different systems.

- MTA is maintained by DOR. Use the self-recovery process if you forget your MTA password or lock out your account.  If you need assistance, contact customer service by emailing dormytaxaccounthelp@revenue.wi.gov or calling 608-261-5338.

- The WAMS system is a state wide key to access different systems throughout state government. WAMS is maintained by the Department of Administration, Division of Enterprise Technology. The webpage allows you to register if you are a new user and manage your profiles. There is a self-recovery option if you forget your password or your account gets locked out. You can go to the Profile Management page to reset.

## Historical Agency Collections

Numbers are based on a fiscal year (FY) July 1st to June 30th; numbers are through September 30, 2014.

**Tax Refund Intercept Program**

**Statewide Debt Collection Program**
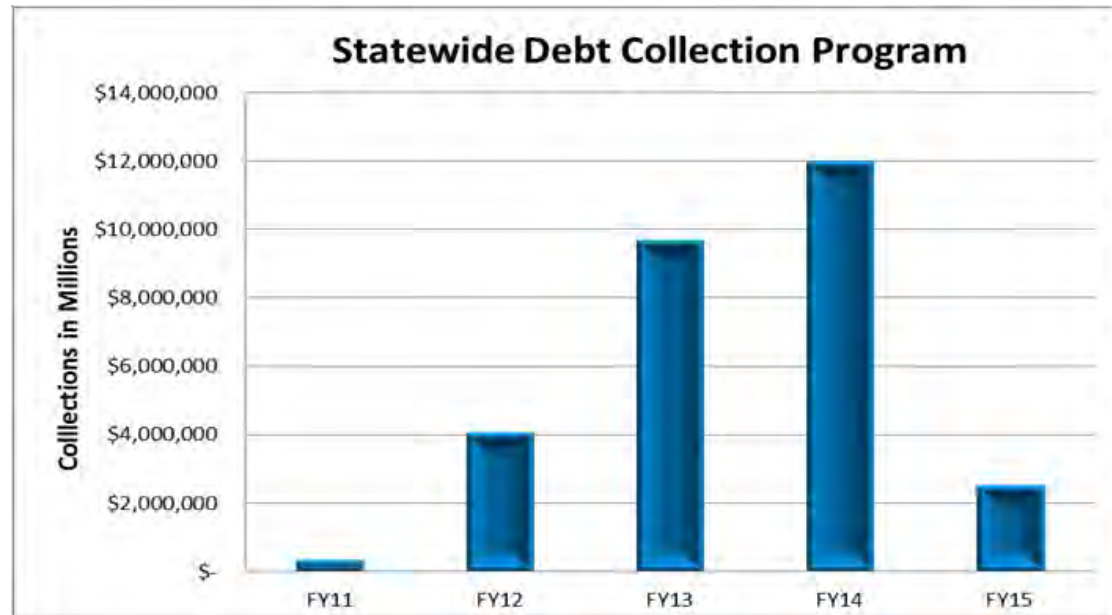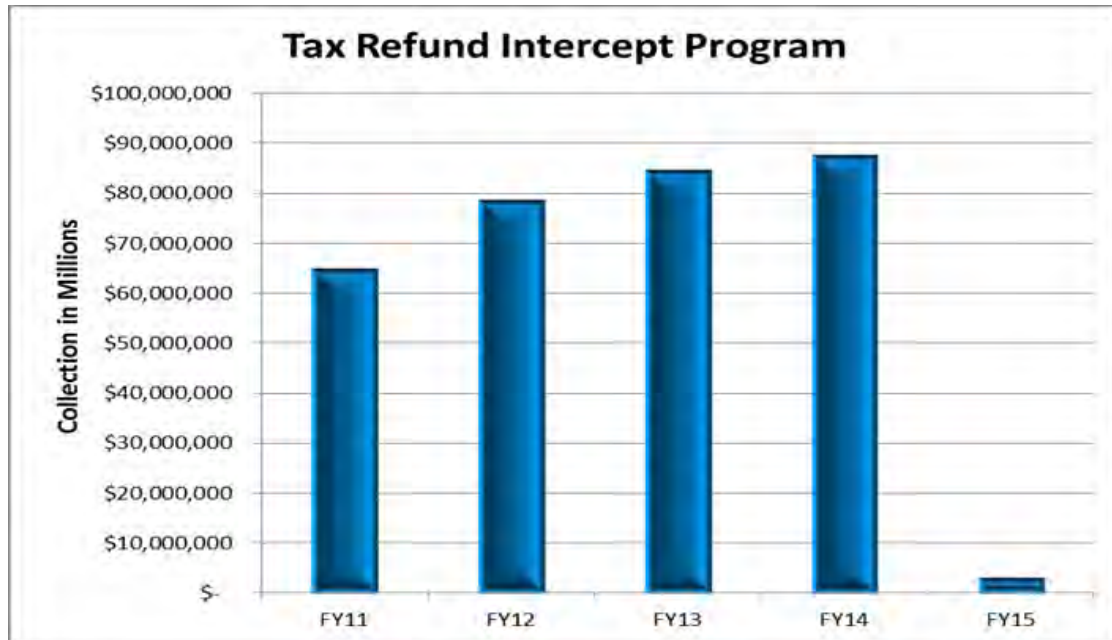
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