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## EQUITY NEWS AND VIEWS

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Information is power when it comes to levying on judgments. One key piece of information in satisfying your judgment is the defendant's social security number. Except for very rare circumstances, employers and banks will not honor a Writ of Execution without this key identifier. The levying officers at Equity greatly appreciate the inclusion of social security numbers on your praecipes. However, after the Montana Supreme Court ruled in 2007 that full social security and bank account numbers should not be

accessible to the public in court records, the job of levying officer has become more challenging.

Equity certainly respects every American's right to privacy, and



we would not want to contribute to the misuse of anyone's personal information. At the same time, we strive to efficiently process writs. Since many clients opt to have signed writs forwarded directly to Equity from the court, and Equity serves a writ as is, without independent research on our part, we are in the process of developing systems for managing service information with each of you. If you would like to discuss your options, please contact our office at 406-721-3337.



## EQUITY GO BRAGH



Equity employees are generally a modest bunch. If you had a conversation with one, you would find that many of our accomplishments in serving and levying are attributed to luck. But what is luck? Are Equity employees really that fortuitous? If you believe luck is that which happens which is beyond a person's control, then we are probably not that lucky at all. Rarely do defendants randomly pop by our office or walk up to a server in the field when we have a legal document to deliver to them. Even more rare these days are the pots of gold waiting in defendants' bank accounts for levying purposes. No, we are not so lucky.

What are we, then, if not lucky? Four things come to mind: well equipped, persistent, observant, and experienced. We seem to be at the right place at the right time so frequently because we have researched our service information, we attempt often at a variety of times and/or places, we tend to notice the little things around a service address, and we have the insight into when and where to go for the best results on a service. Equity has been in the business of tracking down defendants and levying on assets since 1992. We wish you all good luck with your respective cases, and if you would like Equity's experience to improve your business, do not hesitate to call us.

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## DIALING AND DRIVING

Aside from their alleged good looks, the top five tools of the trade for Equity process servers are: an efficient, unassuming vehicle, a cell phone, a laptop computer, a flashlight, and a mapping program, such as a wireless navigational system, computer program, or a good old county map. Not quite making the list this year are dog treats, snowshoes, and mobile printers. The top two devices, however, pose a potential hazard when combined, according to the National Safety Council. In fact, Senate Bill 278, the one aimed at prohibiting hand-held cell phone use and text messaging while driving for Montanans, is still alive. While Equity servers are not the only ones out on the road racking up the minutes on their wireless

plans, they are as concerned with public safety as they are finding your defendants.



In an average week, Equity servers will collectively drive over 4,000 miles. Depending on the server, individual cell phone usage can reach upwards of 400 minutes per week. Given the amount of driving that occurs, and the need for servers to be available for calls from the home office and return calls from defendants, a variety of options are being considered and implemented.

First and foremost, servers are asked to initiate calls from a parked position, preferably before they leave their stationary offices. For incoming calls, if answered on the road at all, servers may ask callers to wait momentarily while pulling over to the side of the road. Studies have shown that hands-free devices are not the savior people may think, as it is the conversation itself that slows perception and reaction time. In accordance with these findings, Equity servers are making the effort to find a safe place to park when using their phones. As advantageous as multi-tasking can be, when it comes to cell phone use and driving, we at Equity are attempting to cut back on this potentially dangerous practice.