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MICROSOFT SETTLEMENT BENEFITS AVAILABLE UNTIL JUNE 30, 2007

Wisconsin businesses, governments, and individuals who bought Microsoft software between December 7, 1993, and April 30, 2003, are entitled to receive benefits from a class action settlement with Microsoft, but they must act by June 30, 2007.

Several Wisconsin plaintiffs brought lawsuits in Wisconsin courts claiming that Microsoft's marketing practices violated Wisconsin antitrust and unfair trade laws. Microsoft denied the allegations, but did agree to a settlement which could provide as much as $224,000,000 in benefits to Wisconsin consumers, businesses, and local governments.

To qualify for benefits, the individual, business, or governmental unit must have purchased for use in Wisconsin one or more of certain Microsoft programs either as a standalone purchase or already installed in a computer between December 7, 1993, and April 30, 2003. The software programs at issue are: Microsoft Office, Microsoft Excel, Windows, MS-DOS and Microsoft "Word". In addition to the initial program, each upgrade purchased is eligible as well as each license that was multiply purchased.

To get the benefits, eligible Wisconsin individuals, businesses, and governments should go to the following web site and obtain a claim form: www.microsoftwisuit.com. The form must be completed and mailed by June 30, 2007, to "Microsoft-Wisconsin Settlement, P.O. Box 1626, Minneapolis, MN 55440-1626."

For each Windows or MS-DOS program purchased during the applicable period, the purchaser is entitled to a $15 voucher. Each Office and Excel purchase yields a $23 voucher and each Word purchase yields a $10 voucher. Claims under $100 may be filed online and supporting documentation is not required. For larger claims including claims by volume license purchasers, the claim form includes a box which requires the claims administrator to search Microsoft's records for eligible purchases.

It is expected that vouchers will begin issuing to the eligible purchasers by late 2007. Voucher owners may submit their vouchers for cash upon proof of purchase of any desktop, laptop or tablet computers, or for printers, scanners, monitors, and keyboards. The new purchases do not have to be for a Microsoft product but must be made in the three years after receipt of the voucher.

O’Neil Cannon, Attorney Carl K. Buesing recently attended a seminar sponsored by the Wisconsin Counties Association which outlined the Microsoft litigation. “The benefits of this settlement are potentially enormous, particularly for businesses that made significant software investments during the 1990s,” observed Buesing who also serves as Sheboygan County’s Corporation Counsel. Buesing noted that the Wisconsin Counties Association was a participant in the litigation that resulted in the settlement.

Individuals, governments, and businesses who have questions about their eligibility for settlement benefits are encouraged to access the website at www.microsoftwisuit.com, or are welcome to call Attorney Buesing at O’Neil, Cannon, Hollman, DeJong’s Sheboygan office at (920) 457-8400.