

# State & Local Government Auctions: The Moneymaker of the 1990's

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# State & Local Government Auctions: The Moneymaker of the 1990's

## OVERVIEW OF GOVERNMENT AUCTIONS

Most people are completely unaware of the bargains that can be found in the most unlikely of places: the government! We're used to reading about the Pentagon paying \$59.00 for a wrench, about the national debt rising higher and higher, so it's excusable to not think of government and "sales" in the same sentence.

Yet nearly every level of government from city and town on up through county, state and federal, has possession of excess property that must be disposed of. If this can be accomplished and money raised at the same time, why not? We want government to be fiscally responsible, right?

The most common method of parting with this overage of property is through auction sales. These affairs offer a unique opportunity to the right person purchases at bargain basement prices which you can turn around and sell at a profit! The money to be made staggers the imagination.

From property seized by police officers or customs officials to repossessions by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, there are thousands of items of all types available at rock bottom prices. Whether you're merely buying for yourself or seeing this as a line of business that could make you a substantial profit, the key is to identify and locate these auctions.

You name it! Houses, cars, jewelry, yachts, government farm equipment,

computers, firewood it's there for the bidding... and the buying! And, eventually the selling for profit!

You don't need much experience for this. You are familiar with what many of these items cost today on the open market. If you buy it far enough below market value, you can still sell the property yourself at a discount and make a handsome profit.

If you yourself have always wanted to own a luxury yacht, here's your chance. You'll never find your dream purchase at a lower price.

You could even start a secondhand store or set up shop at a flea market or swap shop to peddle your merchandise after you've acquired it. Many of these places are havens for shoppers. You've simply gone them one better by obtaining the good(s) at an even lower price than they'll pay and they'll be pleased with their "bargain".

There are open bidding auctions, where you shout out the dollar value you're willing to pay following a minimum bid requirement called by the auctioneer. There are also sealed bid auctions where you submit the price you're willing to pay. You get only one shot at that type of bidding.

Be careful with the open bid auctions. You can become so focused on a particular piece of property that you end up in a "bidding war" that ends up with your paying more than you should and cutting well into your eventual profit. Be disciplined! Set a dollar limit ahead of time so that you can let certain items go if the bidding goes too high. This is a business now, so common money sense is important. You must now think in terms of expenses vs. revenue.

If you have a certain hobby or interest, property in this area may be your natural market. If you specialize, it can help you concentrate on only

those items in the large auction areas where there are hundreds of people bidding for thousands of goods. Your focus will be in your area and you'll soon be an expert on costs, prices and resale's of this commodity.

Auctions can be hyped up to the point of temptation to overbid. Don't do it! Remember your goal, your budget and your knowledge of what things cost and you'll do very well. Through the contacts listed in this booklet, you will find yourself on a regular mailing list of government auctions. Often, with the notice, you'll receive a catalog of the items to be sold and approximately what time they'll be auctioned. This will allow you to budget your time wisely at these affairs and not get lost in the shuffle.

This report shows you exactly who to contact about auctions in your state!

We also show you how to find municipal and county auctions. Read on!

## **STATE GOVERNMENT AUCTIONS**

These are the state contacts and a brief description of auctions held at this level of government.

### **ALABAMA:**

Alabama Surplus Property

P.O. Box 210487

Montgomery, AL 36121

(205) 277-5866

Alabama auctions offer a variety of goods usually three times a year.

Items: office equipment, cars, farm machinery, trucks, boats, tractors and more. There is a mailing list you can be placed on.

ALASKA:

Surplus Property Management Office

2400 Viking Drive

Anchorage, AK 99501

(907) 279-0596

It's best to call the Juneau office (907) 465-2172 to be placed on their mailing list. There are weekly auctions of smaller items like furniture and office equipment and spring and fall auctions for larger items like cars.

ARIZONA:

Office of Surplus Property

1537 W. Jackson Street

Phoenix, AZ 85007

(602) 542-5701

Auctions held four times per year. Items: computers, cars, furniture and thousands of other pieces. Mailing list is available.

ARKANSAS:

State Marketing & Redistribution Office

6620 Young Rd.

Little Rock, AR 72209

(501) 565-8645

Mailing list available. Both regular and sealed bid auctions are held.

Weekly events.

CALIFORNIA:

Office of Fleet Administration

1416 10th Street

Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 657-2318

Open bid auctions once a month of surplus vehicles on Saturdays at Sacramento or Los Angeles. Mailing list.

COLORADO:

Department of Correctional Industries

State Surplus Agency

4200 Garfield Street

Denver, CO 80216

(303) 321-2200

Several auctions per year. Mailing list is available. Nonprofit organizations have first choice.

CONNECTICUT:

State Auction Department

60 State St. Rear

Wethersfield, CT 06109

(203) 566-7018 (or (203) 566-7190)

Eight to ten auctions per year. Vehicles usually auctioned on the second Saturday of the month. Registration fee.

DELAWARE:

Division of Purchasing Surplus Property

P.O. Box 299

Delaware City, DE 19706

(302) 834-4550

In May and September, there are public auctions of vehicles, office furniture and other surplus property. Mailing list is available.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:

Department of Public Works

5001 Shepard Parkway

Washington, DC 20032

(202) 404-1068

Vehicle auctions held the first and third Tuesday of the month. No mailing list. Registration fee.

FLORIDA:

Department of Management Services

813A Lake Bradford Road

Tallahassee, FL 32304

(904) 488-5272

This address is a "retail" store with items available for sale. Motor Vehicle Bureau (904) 488-5178 holds vehicle auctions once a month at various locations throughout the state.

GEORGIA:

Department of Administrative Services

Purchasing Division, Surplus Property

1050 Murphy Avenue, S.W.

Atlanta, GA 30310

(404) 756-4800

Several auctions per year, held on the third Wednesday of the month chosen.

Mailing list. Items: vehicles, shop equipment, typewriters, computers,

copiers and more.

**HAWAII:**

No state surplus auctions.

**IDAHO:**

Division of Purchasing

(208) 327-7465

Idaho's state agencies hold their own auctions. You must contact the specific state agency directly. Auctions advertised in newspaper.

**ILLINOIS:**

Central Management Services

Division of Property Control

3550 Great Northern Ave.

Springfield, IL 62707

(217) 793-1813

Auctions held at Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield two or three times per year on Saturdays. Mailing list available for \$20/year. Items: desks, chairs, calculators, cameras, refrigerators and more.

**INDIANA:**

State Surplus Property Section

229 W. New York Street

Indianapolis, IN 46202

(317) 232-0134

Auctions held as needed each year. No mailing list, but contact this office in May for a schedule.

**IOWA:**

Department of Natural Resources

Wallace State Office Bldg.

Des Moines, IA 50319

(515) 281-5121

Auction is second Saturday of May for items such as boats, fishing rods, tackle boxes and hunting equipment. The Vehicle Dispatchers Garage holds vehicle auctions three to four times per year. Call (515) 2815121.

KANSAS:

State Surplus Property

P.O. Box 19226

Topeka, KS 666190226

(913) 296-2334

Many items left over for sale following offering to state agencies. Contact office for information on events.

KENTUCKY:

Office of Surplus Property

514 Barrett Avenue

Frankfurt, KY 40601

(502) 564-4836

Saturday auctions every two to three months as needed. Items: vehicles, desks, chairs, couches, beds, lawn mowers, etc. Mailing list is available.

LOUISIANA:

Division of Administration

Louisiana Property Assistance Agency

P.O. Box 94095

Baton Rouge, LA 708049095

(504) 342-6849

Auctions held on the second Saturday of each month at 1502 N. 17th St.

Items: medical and office equipment, boats, bicycles, televisions, vehicles and more.

MAINE:

Office of Surplus Property

Station 95

Augusta, ME 04333

(207) 289-5750

Public auctions five to six times per year. Primarily vehicles. No mailing list.

MARYLAND:

Department for Surplus Property

P.O. Box 122

8037 Brock Bridge Rd.

Jesup, MD 20794

No public auctions. Address above is a "retail" store for surplus property.

MASSACHUSETTS:

State Purchasing Agency

Department of Procurement & General Services

Surplus Property

One Ashburton Place

Boston, MA 02108

(617) 727-7500

Public auctions six times per year, usually on Saturdays. Vehicles primarily. No mailing list.

MICHIGAN:

Department of Management & Budget

State Surplus Property

P.O. Box 30026

Lansing, MI 48913

(517) 335-8444

Mailing list. Several auctions per year. Items: office furniture, household goods, machinery, livestock, vehicles and more.

MINNESOTA:

Surplus Operations Office

5420 Highway 8

New Brighton, MN 55112

(612) 639-4022

About 15 auctions per year held around the state. Items include vehicles, boats and snowmobiles along with jewelry, furniture, computers, stereos and more. Mailing list.

MISSISSIPPI:

Bureau of Surplus Property

P.O. Box 5778

Jackson, MS 39288

(601) 939-2050

Two to three auctions per year of machinery and vehicles. Mailing list.

MISSOURI:

Surplus Property Office

Materials Management Section

P.O. Drawer 1310

Jefferson City, MO 65102

(314) 751-3415

Regular auctions held throughout the year. Items: clothing, office equipment and vehicles. Mailing list.

**MONTANA:**

Property and Supply Bureau

930 Lyndale Avenue

Helena, MT 59620

(406) 444-4514

One auction a year for vehicles. Mailing list. Other property auctioned the second Friday of each month.

**NEBRASKA:**

Office of Administrative Services

Material Division, Surplus Property

P.O. Box 94901

Lincoln, NE 68509

(402) 479-4890

Auctions held three to four times per year. Items: office furniture, computers, couches and more. Separate vehicle auctions held. Mailing list.

**NEVADA:**

State Purchasing Division

Kinkead Bldg. 400 Capitol Complex

Carson City, NV 89710

(702) 687-4070

Second Saturday in August at 2250 Barnett Way, Reno, Nevada, 89512.

Separate sealed bid auction mailing list is available, too. You must bid at least once over two to three auctions or you'll be dropped from the list.

NEW HAMPSHIRE:

Office of Surplus Property

78 Regional Drive Building 3

Concord, NH 03301

(603) 271-2126

Two auctions per year of vehicles and other property. Mailing list.

NEW JERSEY:

Purchase and Property Distribution Center

CN234

Trenton, NJ 08625

(609) 530-3300

State vehicle auctions as needed. Mailing list.

NEW MEXICO:

Highway & Transportation Department

P.O. Box 1149

Santa Fe, NM 87504

Last Saturday in September. Vehicles and office equipment. Mailing list.

NEW YORK:

Office of General Service

Bureau of Surplus Property

Bldg. #18, Harriman State Office Bldg. Campus

Albany, NY 12226

(518) 457-6335

Frequent auctions around the state. Sold by category. Mailing list.

NORTH CAROLINA:

State Surplus Property

P.O. Box 33900

Raleigh, NC 27636

(919) 733-3889

Sealed bid auctions. Mailing list. Warehouse available to inspect items.

NORTH DAKOTA:

Surplus Property Office

P.O. Box 7293

Bismarck, ND 58507

(701) 224-2273

Annual auction each September. Items: vehicles, office furniture and equipment. Auction is advertised two days in advance.

OHIO:

State and Federal Surplus Property

4200 Surface Road

Columbus, OH 43228

(614) 466-5052

Public auctions and sealed bid sales several times per year. Mailing list.

Items: vehicles, office machines, furniture and more.

OKLAHOMA:

Central Purchasing Department

Central Services, B4, State Capitol

Oklahoma City, OK 73105

(405) 521-3046

Several auctions throughout the year. \$10 gets you on a mailing list.

OREGON:

Department of General Services

Surplus Property

1655 Salem Industrial Dr., N.E. Salem, OR 97310

(503) 378-4714

Public auctions held every Friday of items such as vehicles, desks, computers, snow plows, horse trailers and more.

PENNSYLVANIA:

General Services Department

Bureau of Vehicle Management

2221 Forster Street

Harrisburg, PA 17105

(717) 783-3132

Vehicle auctions at least ten times per year. Mailing list. Bureau of Supplies (7177874083) also auctions numerous items. Mailing list available.

RHODE ISLAND:

Department of Administration

Division of Purchase

1 Capitol Hill

Providence, RI 02908

Rare public auctions, advertised in local papers. Sealed bids to a list of buyers of vehicles and office equipment. Call to see if you can get on the list.

SOUTH CAROLINA:

Surplus Property Office

Division of General Services

1441 Boston Avenue

West Columbia, SC 29170

(803) 822-5490

Warehouse is at above address. Auctions held periodically. No mailing list.

Public Transportation Office (8037371488) keeps a mailing list for its vehicle auctions held every five to six weeks.

**SOUTH DAKOTA:**

Bureau of Administration

State Property Management

701 East Sioux Avenue

Pierre, SD 57501

(605) 773-4935

Two auctions per year, spring and fall. Vehicles. Mailing list.

**TENNESSEE:**

Department of General Services Property Utilization

6500 Centennial Blvd.

Nashville, TN 37243

(615) 741-1711

Periodic auctions of vehicles and assorted machinery. Mailing list.

**TEXAS:**

State Purchasing & General Services Commission

P.O. Box 13047

Capitol Station

Austin, TX 78711

(512) 463-3445

Every two months, auction of vehicles, office furniture, machines and highway equipment is held. Mailing list.

**UTAH:**

State Surplus Office

522 South 700 West

Salt Lake City, UT 84104

(801) 533-5885

Auctions of vehicles, office furniture and heavy equipment are held four or five times per year. Mailing list.

VERMONT:

Central Surplus Property Agency

RD #2 Box 520

Montpelier, VT 05602

(802) 828-3394

Warehouse at Central Garage on Barre Montpelier Street. Items: office furniture and machines. Public auctions for vehicles in May and September.

Mailing list.

VIRGINIA:

State Surplus Property

P.O. Box 1199

Richmond, VA 23231

(804) 786-3876

Regular auctions for all types of items including office equipment, computers, tractors, bulldozers and more. Mailing list. Cars auctioned twice a year.

WASHINGTON:

Office of Commodity Redistribution

2805 C. St. SW Bldg. 5, Door 49

Auburn, WA 98001

(206) 931-3931

Central warehouse open noon to 2:30 PM on Fridays. Cash only.

**WEST VIRGINIA:**

State Agency Surplus Property

2700 Charles Avenue

Dunbar, WV 25064

(304) 766-2626

Auctions every month. Items: chairs, desks, telephones, computers and more.

Mailing list.

**WISCONSIN:**

Department of Transportation

P.O. Box 7396

Madison, WI 53707

(608) 2663965

Warehouse at Hill Farm Bldg., 4802 Sheboygan Avenue. Department of Administration (6082668024) holds public auctions every month for vehicles.

Mailing list.

**WYOMING:**

State Motor Pool

723 West 19th St.

Cheyenne, WY 82002

(307) 777-7247

Periodic vehicle auctions. Mailing list.

**STATE UNCLAIMED PROPERTY**

There are billions of dollars in this country in unclaimed money sitting in state property offices money from uncashed stock dividends, forgotten bank

accounts, insurance proceeds, utility deposits, safe deposit boxes and similar uncollected items.

People move, die, lose track of various accounts; it all adds up to huge dollars. After a stipulated period of time that this money goes unclaimed, the state is notified and then tries to track down the rightful owners of the money.

How does this affect you? Obviously, if you think you may be the beneficiary of some of that unclaimed money, you can contact your state's department of revenue to find out more. The other possibility is the opportunity to help track down the missing individuals. State resources being slim these days, you may be able to earn a finder's fee by locating the person.

Finder's fees can range fairly high depending on the amount you make someone aware that they're entitled to receive. Some states have formal rules on the fee you could be paid. There is a concern on the states' part about overcharging the beneficiary, so keep the fees reasonable. It is a way to earn some money through your ability to track people down and tell them about their unclaimed cash.

Contact your state's department of revenue for a lead on this information and about any fee restriction or regulation that may exist.

#### LOCAL CITY & COUNTY AUCTIONS

There are far too many municipalities to try and list them all here. To find out if your county, parish or town holds surplus property auctions just contact their main office and ask someone. Usually, they are only too happy to help. The larger the city or county is, the more likely they are to hold auctions for surplus property. If you live in a rural area, don't

be discouraged. Even if your town does not hold any auctions, you might still benefit from contacting them as they may be able to steer you toward a nearby county or town that does!

**SUMMARY: You're In Business Now!**

This is a wide assortment of contact listings for you to begin your new career in the buying and selling business. People are going to buy goods from you or from someone else. Why not take advantage of the outstanding savings you can accumulate by having the government locate your acquisitions for you?

You always thought the government only took taxes from you. Here's a chance to get some back! Of course, it will probably increase your taxes as your income goes up, but that's a good problem to have, right?

Good Luck!