

## Part I: Wyoming Communities Impacted

The news appears to be filled with stories of local governments who have had the unfortunate experience of the unscrupulous, and find themselves the victims of fraud. Dixon, Illinois, for example, is known where the town's treasurer managed to steal over \$53,000,000 to support her horse breeding hobby. This fraud went on for over twenty years before it was discovered.<sup>1</sup> As distant as Dixon, Illinois may be from Wyoming, it is important to note its demographics are similar to many communities in Wyoming. While the magnitude of the fraud in Illinois is breathtaking, it is important to realize Wyoming's communities are not immune.

- In the Town of Mills, cash payments were stolen from utility customers, the town's credit card was abused, and over \$60,000 was embezzled over a three-year period.
- In the Town of Kirby, the town's credit card was used to make purchases for the clerk's cosmetics business and other personal items. The town lost over \$10,000.
- In the City of Rawlins, the treasurer was able to generate fictitious payroll checks to herself, with over \$225,000 stolen.
- In Sheridan County, falsified daily reports were made to match the cash sheet and deposit slip, concealing over \$110,000.
- The Uinta County Conservation District had a clerk who forged checks to herself. She was sentenced to restitution and probation. A few years later, she once again forged checks at Sublette County Mosquito Abatement #2.
- The Star Valley Senior Center had an employee issue additional paychecks without authorization and cashed checks for personal use. The damage was for over \$123,000.
- The Town of Rolling Hills saw the town's credit card used for personal use. Direct bills were signed for personal items with the town ultimately paying for them. Signatures were forged on town's checks. \$125,000 was lost.
- In the Town of Guernsey, money was taken improperly, and the clerk was ultimately charged with Income Tax evasion. The clerk was charged with not paying taxes on \$275,000 of stolen funds.

These frauds are just a sample of those identified by the Department of Audit (DOA) through audits or by law enforcement who asked the DOA for assistance in their investigations in the past twenty years. While most audits conducted by the Public Funds Division do not uncover fraud; frauds have been (and will continue to be) a serious problem for state government, counties, cities, towns, and special districts.