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Government E-Goods

CONSUMER NEWS — eBay isn't the only place to find online auctions. Local governments are getting into the act, selling everything from homes to cars to jewelry.

If you are looking for bargains, check out what police departments and local governments have to offer. Sometimes it is a real steal: literally.

Savvy shoppers are finding great deals on government e-auctions where police department, cities and towns, even federal agencies, put items up for bid.

The government's central auction site sells goods from the I.R.S., Defense Department and other agencies.

What's up for grabs?

- personal property
- real estate
- used automobiles
- boats
- recreational vehicles
- time shares.

There are dozens of other e-auctions sites that offer government goods.

Tom Lane runs "Steal-It-Back.com" -- an e-auction site that sells confiscated or unclaimed items from local police departments.

Items found on this site:

- TVs
- transformers
- sporting goods equipment
- radios
- walkmans
- Play Station 2s

Casey Coleman, Firstgov.gov says, "Auctions are a good deal for the taxpayer, because not only does it raise money that can be used in place of tax dollars, but also takes those items off our rolls so we no longer have to pay for the upkeep and maintenance on them."

One watchdog group, "Citizens Against Government Waste" says the auctions aren't all they could be because the government often sells items well below their worth, cheating taxpayers out of potential savings.

If you want to be linked to the various government e-good website log onto:

- www.firstgov.gov/shopping/shopping.shtml
- www.stealitback.com
- www.government-auctions-guide.com
- www.government-auctions.com
- www.auctionspass.com
- www.bid4assets.com

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