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## **US Marshals Searching for Escaped Prisoner Frederick Darren Berg, one of Washington State's Largest Convicted Ponzi Schemers**

**FRESNO, Calif.** – U.S. Marshals are searching for Frederick Darren Berg, 55, who escaped from a Federal Bureau of Prisons facility in Atwater, California, Wednesday. Berg was responsible for the largest fraud scheme ever prosecuted in the Western District of Washington.

The Marshals are asking California, Oregon, and Washington residents who might have information on his whereabouts to contact them.

Berg is a white male, 6 feet tall, 170 pounds, with brown hair and hazel eyes.

Berg, of Mercer Island, Washington, was sentenced in 2012 in U.S. District Court in Seattle to 18 years in prison for wire fraud, money laundering and bankruptcy fraud. He has more than 10 years left on his sentence (he was credited with time served from the time of his arrest in 2010). Berg was also ordered to pay more than \$140 million in restitution.

Berg was the founder of the Meridian Group of investment funds. The funds represented that \$245 million in investor money was invested in real estate contracts and real estate; however, the funds were actually elaborate Ponzi schemes. At sentencing U.S. District Judge Richard A. Jones told Berg he had "reckless disregard for his victims... and had no moral compass."

To report any tips or sightings of Berg, contact the U.S. Marshals on 800-336-0102.

NOTE TO MEDIA: See attached Wanted Poster.



[www.usmarshals.gov](http://www.usmarshals.gov)

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