



News from

Office of the Attorney General
55 Elm Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Attorney General

Richard Blumenthal

For
Immediate
Release

WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 2010

CT ATTORNEY GENERAL SEEKS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON GOOGLE STREET VIEW SNOOPING, ANNOUNCES 37 STATES HAVE JOINED MULTISTATE INVESTIGATION

Attorney General Richard Blumenthal today on behalf of the executive committee of a 37-state coalition asked Google whether it tested its Street View software before use -- which should have revealed that the program collected data transmitted over wireless computer networks.

Google has acknowledged unauthorized collection of data -- possibly including emails, passwords, web browsing and other confidential information -- but called it a mistake.

In a letter to Google, Blumenthal seeks other information, including whether the company sold or otherwise used technical network information also collected.

"If Google tested this software, it should have known all along that Street View cars would snare and collect confidential data from homes across America," Blumenthal said. "Now the question is how it may have used -- and secured -- all this private information.

"Google's responses continue to generate more questions than they answer. Our powerful multistate coalition -- 37 states so far -- is demanding that Google reveal whether it tested Street View software, which should have revealed that it was collecting payload data.

"We are asking Google to identify specific individuals responsible for the snooping code and how Google was unaware that this code allowed the Street View cars to collect data transmitted over WiFi networks. Information we are awaiting includes how the spy software was included in Google's Street View program and specific locations where unauthorized data collection occurred.

"We will take all appropriate steps -- including potential legal action if warranted -- to obtain complete, comprehensive answers."

Blumenthal sent the letter as part of the multistate investigation he is leading into Google's unauthorized collection of data transmitted over wireless networks.

Blumenthal said that that 37 states and the District of Columbia have formally joined the multistate investigation so far. The executive committee led by Connecticut includes Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Missouri and Texas.

"Our partnership -- 37 states and counting -- will vigorously and aggressively investigate Google's Street View cars' unauthorized collection of data transmitted over wireless networks," Blumenthal said. "Google must come completely clean, fully explaining how this invasion of personal privacy happened and why.

"Consumers have a right to expect that data transmitted over personal and business wireless networks remains confidential. Our multistate investigation will determine whether laws were broken and whether legislation is necessary to prevent future privacy breaches."

Other states that have signed onto Blumenthal's multistate include New York, Mississippi, Vermont, Nebraska, Michigan, North Carolina, Oregon, Washington, Kansas, Montana and Rhode Island.

Eight states have declined to be publicly identified because their laws or procedures prohibit disclosure of investigations. Blumenthal's office is seeking permission to publicize the remaining states and soliciting additional states to join the investigation.

****END****