

## **What are the Penalties for Pirating Software?**

Software theft is a serious matter. If you or your company is caught copying software, you may be held liable under both civil and criminal law.

If the copyright owner brings a civil action against you, the owner can seek to stop you from using its software immediately and can also request monetary damages. The copyright owner may then choose between actual damages, which include the amount it has lost because of your infringement as well as any profits attributable to the infringement, and statutory damages, which can be as much as \$150,000 for each program copied. In addition, the government can criminally prosecute you for copyright infringement. If convicted, you can be fined up to \$250,000 or sentenced to jail for up to five years, or both. (per count).