

# Prenzler asks State's Attorney's office to look at alleged destruction of Madison County data

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**EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County Board Chairman Kurt Prenzler** is asking the State's Attorney's Office to look into the alleged destruction of data from office computers by the former administration.

After some discoveries, Prenzler is requesting State's Attorney Tom Gibbons investigate the matter in which the former county board chairman, Alan Dunstan, and county

administrator, Joe Parente, where Prenzler alleges the possibility of wiped/destroyed information on their hard drives prior to leaving the county offices. The destroyed information includes county documents that were subject to retention under state law and court order, Prenzler said.

On Nov. 15, 2016, Prenzler presented a “Notice to Preserve Records and Documents” to Parente. The notice stated that as the newly elected county board chairman computer and electronic information be kept.

County Administrator Doug Hulme said the discovery came in late December after a conversation with newly appointed Treasurer Chris Slusser and IT Director Rob Dorman.

“Mr. Slusser asked what could be done to remove computers marked ‘FBI evidence’ from the storage in the Treasurer’s Office,” Hulme said.

Hulme said the computers were used in the case of former treasurer Fred Bathon, who went to prison for rigging tax sales.

“Mr. Dorman said he could remove them from the office, but I told him that information on the hard drives needed to be segregated and saved for any Freedom of Information Act requests,” Hulme said. “At that time I also wanted the same done on the computers used by Mr. Dunstan and Mr. Parente.”

Dorman said the process whenever an employee leaves is to make a copy of the computer’s hard drive onto the county server. He said when IT staff went to retrieve the information on the hard drives for Dunstan and Parente there was limited information or none at all.

“Mr. Dunstan’s computer had little profile data and Mr. Parente’s hard drive was completely blank,” Dorman said.

Dorman contacted a Denver, Colo. company, DataTech Labs Data Recovery, which specializes in recovering information from hard drives for government agencies. The hard drives were sent to the company in January for inspection.

Hulme said the county was waiting for more information before contacting the State’s Attorney. He said since the discovery of the missing material he’s received a FOIA request for information stored on Dunstan and Parente’s computer.