

WARD MEL  
Form 4  
December 30, 2005

**FORM 4** UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person \*  
WARD MEL

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol  
STAGE STORES INC [STGS]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)  
12/28/2005

\_\_\_\_ Director \_\_\_\_\_ 10% Owner  
 Officer (give title below) \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify below)

SVP, Real Estate

10201 S. MAIN STREET

(Street)

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)  
 Form filed by One Reporting Person  
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

HOUSTON, TX 77025

(City) (State) (Zip)

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
			Code	V	Amount or Price		
Common Stock	12/28/2005		M		6,250 A \$ 9.17	6,250	D
Common Stock	12/28/2005		M		6,251 A \$ 10	12,501	D
Common Stock	12/28/2005		M		749 A \$ 10.83	13,250	D
Common Stock	12/28/2005		M		6,250 A \$ 10.83	19,500	D
Common Stock	12/28/2005		S		19,500 (1) D \$ 30	0	D

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Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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(9-02)

**Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**  
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4)	8. Amount or Number of Shares
Stock Option (Right to Buy)	\$ 9.17	12/28/2005		M	6,250	08/24/2005 08/24/2011	Common Stock	6,250
Stock Option (Right to buy)	\$ 10	12/28/2005		M	6,251	08/24/2005 08/24/2011	Common Stock	6,251
Stock Option (Right to buy)	\$ 10.83	12/28/2005		M	749	08/24/2004 08/24/2011	Common Stock	749
Stock Option (Right to buy)	\$ 10.83	12/28/2005		M	6,250	08/24/2005 08/24/2011	Common Stock	6,250

## Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
WARD MEL 10201 S. MAIN STREET HOUSTON, TX 77025			SVP, Real Estate	

## Signatures

/s/ Richard E. Stasyszen, Attorney in Fact for Mel  
Ward

12/30/2005

\_\_Signature of Reporting Person

Date

## Explanation of Responses:

- \* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, *see* Instruction 4(b)(v).
- \*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
- (1) This sale was made pursuant to a pre-established, written plan for trading securities pursuant to Rule 10b5-1 adopted by the Securities Exchange Act of 1934  
Includes all derivative securities currently owned by the reporting person including those previously reported as well as options to purchase 7,720 shares of the issuer's common stock received by the reporting person on August 19, 2005 as a result of the three-for-two split of the issuer's common stock payable as a stock dividend to all holders of record of the issuer's common stock at the close of business on August 4, 2005 and the antidilution provisions of the issuer's Amended and Restated 2001 Equity Incentive Plan approved by the issuer's shareholders on June 3, 2004.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *see* Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.