

# Opelousas Police Dept. Press Release



Date: April 23, 2011

From: The Opelousas Police Dept. (Chief Perry Gallow)

The Opelousas Police Department has been investigating several complaints of counterfeit money showing up in the Opelousas area. The majority of these complaints are being reported by our local business establishments. According to Chief Perry Gallow "it is very important that all local businesses take the proper steps in preventing the possibility of receiving counterfeit currency. The individuals passing these bills are counting on business establishments not taking the time to look at the bills, not using the pin to determine its authenticity and cashiers being distracted."

What is counterfeit money and where does it come from?

Counterfeit money is as old as money itself. The Roman Empire had it, and in the US it dates back to the **Civil War**. Unfortunately, it still exists today. Everybody wants or needs more money, but rather than earning it the old fashioned way, crooks make their own. Today, computer and printer technologies make it easier and easier to create fake money.

**In the end, consumers like you and I pay the price. If you find counterfeit money in your wallet, or suspect you've received counterfeit money you should report it as quickly as possible. Contact your local police agency and file a report. Everyone can take steps to protect themselves against counterfeiters: Be familiar with US money; for example, which President's picture is on which bill or coin; where serial numbers and signatures are supposed to be. Look for oddities in the pictures and words, like blurs or smears. Check to make sure each of the items on the bills are the same - corners, presidents, serial number font, etc. Use a counterfeit pen to test paper money. This is common in stores and banks, but it's not fool proof. Our agency has seen some counterfeit bills that when marked with a pen turns the correct color but after a few seconds the mark turns black indicating the bill is fake.**

Vendors are asked to educate their workers on taking those extra few seconds to determine its authenticity. Businesses should receive regular training about what new currency is being used. One of the common indicators we are seeing on the fake bills are identical serial numbers being used for multiple bills. Every bill has its own serial number.

Also, the weight of a bill is very distinctive. The bills we are seeing have been very lightweight. Most counterfeiters find it hard to put their hands on U.S. Treasury note paper which is used to print money on so what they are doing is attempting what's called "washing money".

Chief Perry Gallow  
337-351-8951

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This is when an actual bill is bleached and reprinted with a higher denomination. This process usually results in a poor quality bill. If you become victim of a counterfeiter write down everything you can remember about when, where and from whom you may have received the counterfeit. Place the counterfeit in a plastic bag to protect it from damage and to preserve any evidence on it that may help identify where it came from, like fingerprints or DNA and contact your local police agency.

Anyone with information on any criminal activity within the city limits of Opelousas is asked to call the Opelousas Police Department at 337-948-2500.

Contact Public Information Officer Darren Zachary to obtain any additional information @337-351-1930.

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