

12-30-2010

### **Alert - Counterfeit \$100 bills**

During the last several days higher quality counterfeit \$100 bills have been circulated in the Fairmont area. These bills are “washed” \$5 bills that have been reprinted as a \$100 bills. Counterfeit pens will not detect these bills since they are made from the paper of genuine bills. Clerks need to pay special attention to the silver strip and watermark on \$100 bills being passed. On a genuine \$100 bill, when held up to the light, one will see a watermark of Benjamin Franklin on the right side face of the bill and “USA 100” is repeated throughout the silver strip.

These recent counterfeit \$100 bills will show a watermark of Abraham Lincoln and read “USA 5” repeated in the silver strip. This method of verifying a bill is most effective & practical compared to a counterfeit pen which can be easily defeated without using genuine paper & reprinting. Watermarks and silver strips only applies to new \$5 denominations and larger from the 1996 series forward. There are numerous safeguards incorporated into US currency, please visit the US Secret Service Website and click on the tab “know your money” or visit [http://www.secretservice.gov/know\\_your\\_money.shtml](http://www.secretservice.gov/know_your_money.shtml) for more information.

If you discover that you have a counterfeit bill or detect one while someone is attempting to pass it, please contact your local law enforcement immediately. Do not put yourself in harms way. If possible, do not return the bill and attempt to document as much information about the person passing the bill and what vehicle they may be driving along with a direction of travel if they have left your establishment.

If you have specific questions, contact Detective Tonder at the Fairmont Police Department.