

HENRICO COUNTY BUSINESS WATCH

Partners in Prevention



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Bank Night Drop Larcenies – Make Sure Your Deposits Don't Get Fished

By Det. N. J. Tuzzo – Criminal Investigations

While it may seem new, the term “fishing” is far from a new crime. No, we’re not talking about the more common phishing schemes, or not having a license to fish. We’re talking about thieves using more creative ways to retrieve items, typically money or sensitive documents, from drop-off boxes. Agencies have seen this carried out by using a sticky mouse trap attached to a long string or fishing line to pull out items in the drop-off box. Any business with a drop-off location or drop-off box can be susceptible to this crime. This could be auto repair shops, rental offices, or any other location that has customers using a drop-off box.

There are a few ways to stop, or at the very least deter, people from committing these acts. One way is by installing an anti-theft device that installs a flap to push items into a secure, locked box but not come back out. Another way is by having good, working cameras and adequate lighting. It’s also recommended to have cameras capturing not just the business, but the parking lot as well. Disguises on people are quickly altered, but a vehicle is often more difficult to change. It’s a sad truth, but every business is vulnerable to crime and regardless of if you have a drop-off location or not, these prevention methods can help stop a crime before it even happens.

Welcome to Business Watch

The Henrico County Police Division would like to welcome our new partners in crime prevention. Participating in a Business Watch program is an important step toward a safer environment for yourself, your employees, your customers and your community.

Business Watch Mission

The mission of Henrico’s Business Watch is to promote the exchange of crime and safety information between Henrico Police and the business community for a safer Henrico County. By working together, we can reduce crime in and around the workplace.

If you know of a neighboring business or partner business that would like to be a part of Henrico County Business Watch, please share this link where they can register online!

henrico.us/services/businesswatch/

Follow Us!

Follow us on social media for the latest updates on happenings in the Division, career opportunities, crime alerts, and more.



HENRICO COUNTY BUSINESS WATCH

Check Counterfeiters Target Henrico Businesses

By Det. J. Wood - Economic Crimes Unit

Check counterfeiters have recently defrauded businesses in Henrico County. The losses in these offenses can run into tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars. While fraud by means of personal or business checks has been around for many years, criminal groups have increased the sophistication and success rate of these scams in recent years. New technologies, including Remote Deposit Capture (aka mobile check deposit), have made these crimes easier to commit than in the past. This article will discuss how these schemes work and what businesses can do to mitigate the harm to their bottom line.

In a typical business check counterfeiting case, criminals obtain a business's check by diverting the check from a legitimate source (e.g., obtaining a photograph of a check written to an employee or vendor) or via stealing the check from the United States Mail. The criminals do not need to possess a physical check; only the business name, address, financial institution, account number, and routing number are essential to the scheme. The low cost and ready availability of commercial check stock and check printing computer software enables criminals to use that information to quickly manufacture large quantities of convincing counterfeits.

Upon obtaining a business's checking account information and creating the counterfeit checks, the fraudsters recruit accomplices to cash (utter) the counterfeits. In the past, criminal groups would recruit homeless or other vulnerable individuals and pay them to cash the checks in a bank branch. A modern spin on the offense is to recruit accomplices via social media by promising "quick cash" to anyone with a bank account. The fraudsters provide the counterfeit checks to the accomplices, who use their smartphones to remotely deposit the checks. The accomplices then transfer the money from their account to the scammers via various means (Zelle, gift cards, etc.).

Free Training Available to Business Watch Members

The Community Services Section of the Henrico County Police Division offers a number of free trainings for members of the Business Watch program, including:

- Employee Safety Guidelines
- Workplace Violence Prevention Guidelines
- Responding to Domestic Violence in the Workplace
- Critical Incident Management Guidelines
- Robbery Prevention and Response Guidelines
- Shoplifting Prevention and Response Guidelines
- Check and Credit Card Fraud Response Guidelines
- CPTED and Safer by Design Guidelines
- Drug Awareness in the Workplace

<https://henrico.us/services/businesswatch/>

Metro Richmond Crime Stoppers

If you wish to report a crime or send a tip in anonymously contact: 804-780-1000

You can also download the P3Tips App on your smartphone device or use the link below to submit tips.

p3tips.com/community/index.htm

Current Crime Trends

Be aware of crime happening around you and take precautions to keep yourself, your loved ones, and your property safe.

henrico.us/police/crimealerts



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Due to the nature of Remote Deposit Capture technology, the accomplices can be anywhere in the United States at the time the counterfeit checks are deposited. The use of out-of-state accomplices complicates prosecution of these offenses. Not all accomplices are fully aware that they are participating in a criminal conspiracy. Even if they are knowledgeable that they are committing a crime, the accomplices rarely have direct knowledge of the identity of the counterfeiters. Additionally, the level of detail regarding each mobile deposit varies from bank to bank—some banks maintain minimal records that do not suffice to identify the person operating the smartphone at the time the check was uttered.

While it is difficult to entirely prevent these crimes from occurring, businesses can take simple steps to decrease the probability of becoming a victim. First, business leaders should ensure that checks are kept in a secure environment and that employees handle checks only as needed. Second, managers should verify that vendors and other check recipients actually receive checks sent through the US Mail. Finally, business owners should inquire whether their bank offers positive pay as an available service. Positive pay is a check verification system whereby the bank will confirm with the issuer prior to honoring a check. This is typically done on a set schedule, such as once per month. Positive pay can be an effective tool to prevent a counterfeit check scheme from succeeding.

In the event that your business is defrauded by means of a counterfeit check, notify your bank and your local law enforcement agency right away. If you suspect that a business check was stolen from the US Mail, notify the United States Postal Inspection Service. Should your company desire further information or training regarding these or other common scams, please contact Detective Wood with the Henrico County Police Division Economic Crimes Unit at woo088@henrico.us.

Welcome to the Watch!

These businesses joined Business Watch during the first quarter of 2022. Looking forward to many new members!

Lilly Pulitzer

Beecroft & Bull

Bluemercury

Lovevolve

Starbucks

Chicos

Quinn Boutique

Marcia's Family Hair Care

VA Cars / VA Trucks

Diesel Power of VA

For Eyes

Jus Crab Bar and Grill



HENRICO COUNTY BUSINESS WATCH

Could Your Business Benefit From a Crime Prevention Survey?

By Officer C. K. Basic - Community Policing Unit

It's an unfortunate fact, but crimes occur at businesses in Henrico County daily. As a proud business owner, you likely hope for your business to remain crime free. We in the Henrico Police Division share your hope, and we can help you make a difference. This help comes in the form of a free service called a Security Survey.

A Security Survey (aka Security Audit) is a process in which a Community Police Officer meets with a business representative to recommend specific steps to make the business more secure and less attractive to criminals. After a walkthrough and conversation, the officer can analyze and make suggestions about important details including lighting, access and perimeter control, security systems, policies and procedures, and training. The officer will provide the suggestions on-site and can also provide a written summary afterward.

The type of crime prevention information provided by officers will differ based on the type of business and the specific issues that are faced. Maybe you own a store and your biggest issues are shoplifting and trespassing. We can help you! Perhaps you own an auto-repair shop, and your chief concern is securing the property and the vehicles after business hours. We've got solutions! All businesses must consider internal problems, such as embezzlement, domestic disputes, and potential violence. HPD has advice! The list goes on, but the main point is that your business, whatever it may be, can benefit from solutions obtained following a Security Survey. To schedule a Security Survey at your business, contact the Community Policing Unit at (804)501-5933 or police@henrico.us.



HENRICO.US/POLICE

Contact Information

Henrico County Police Division
Community Policing

P. O. Box 90775

Henrico, Virginia 23273-0775

Phone: 804-501-4838

E-mail: bel26@henrico.us

HENRICO COUNTY BUSINESS WATCH

Why Catalytic Converters are Being Stolen

The demand and cost of the precious metals found inside catalytic converters are at an all-time high and thieves are taking advantage and cashing in. It only takes a few minutes to cut a catalytic converter from a vehicle. They are then sold to recyclers and scrap yards for several hundred dollars per converter.

Report Suspicious Activity and Theft Right Away

- Be informed and take preventative measures.
- Report suspicious activities as they occur.
- Report a stolen catalytic converter to Henrico Police *as soon as possible*. The more evidence we can collect, the better.
- Park vehicles in garages or well-lit areas.
- Report thefts and suspicious activity to Henrico Police right away. Call 911 in an emergency (such as when witnessing someone attempting to steal a converter), or (804) 501-5000 in a non-emergency.
- Report crime information and tips anonymously to Metro Richmond Crime Stoppers at (804) 780-1000, P3TIPS.com, or using the P3Tips app.



ONE TEAM. ONE COMMUNITY.
SAFER TOGETHER

Chief of Police
Eric D. English



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Henrico County Police Division
P.O. Box 90775 | Henrico | VA 23273

Emergency | 911
Non-Emergency | (804) 501-5000
General Info | (804) 501-4800

police@henrico.us

Fall 2021/TB-LB

EMERGENCY: 911
NON-EMERGENCY: (804) 501-5000



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Catalytic Converter Theft



HOW HENRICO POLICE
CAN HELP YOU AVOID
BEING A VICTIM TO THIS RISING CRIME



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Contact Information

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