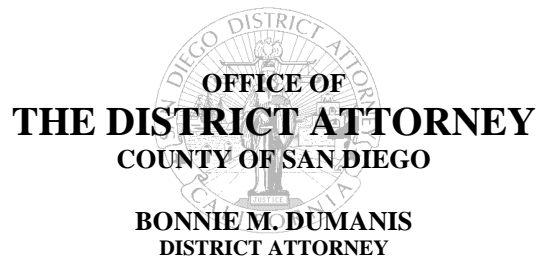


JESUS RODRIGUEZ
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY



San Diego
330 West Broadway
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 531-4040

[San Diego County District Attorney Website](http://www.sandiegocountydistrictattorney.com)

June 17, 2010
For Immediate Release

Contact: [Steve Walker](#)
(619) 531-3890

District Attorney Charges 30 in Widespread Counterfeiting Ring

Criminals Passed More Than \$100,000 in Fake \$100 Bills

San Diego District Attorney [Bonnie M. Dumanis](#), in conjunction with the United States Secret Service, San Diego Regional Fraud Task Force, the United States Marshals Service and the San Diego Police Department, today announced the conclusion of “Operation Blue Ray,” a major counterfeit currency and counterfeit credit card ring investigation based in San Diego County.

“These counterfeiters ripped off local businesses from Ocean Beach to Oceanside,” said DA Dumanis. “By working with our law enforcement partners, we have pulled the plug on one of the most organized counterfeiting operations we have seen lately in San Diego County.”

Between the months of October 2009 and May 2010, Special Agents from the U.S. Secret Service, District Attorney Investigators, San Diego Police detectives and the San Diego Police Department’s Western Division Street Crimes Unit identified an organized group of more than 30 counterfeiters “washing” authentic one-dollar bills and reprinting them as 100-dollar bills. Many of the participants in the ring were known White Supremacists in the Ocean Beach and El Cajon neighborhoods.

The criminal organization was also associated with drug use and possession, including heroin and methamphetamine. The Ocean Beach group committed both random and targeted home invasion robberies, burglaries and car prowls in ocean front corridors from Point Loma to Encinitas. As many as 70 burglaries were committed by subjects participating in the ring, including a series at local hotels in which the flat screen televisions were stolen once the suspects checked into the rooms.

Operators in this ring also used stolen credit cards from residential and car burglaries to book high-end hotel room from Southern Orange County to the Gaslamp Quarter using online booking companies. Once they checked in, counterfeit money labs were constructed inside the rooms while the operators ran up thousands of dollars of charges on the stolen credit cards.

The counterfeit currency was passed at major San Diego retail establishments who were identified as having no policy on accepting counterfeit currency. The name given to the

Follow the District Attorney’s Office on  [Facebook](#)  [YouTube](#)

operation came from the early stages of the operation when only Blue Ray DVD players were being bought with the counterfeit money.

The counterfeit bills passed in San Diego County exceeded \$100,000. Projected losses to the credit industry and local retailers are in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The group transferred their efforts in January 2010 to counterfeiting credit cards onto gift cards, a process that has become increasingly profitable and easy to accomplish given available, inexpensive technology. In excess of 5,000 credit card data files were recovered from key managers in the organization, several of which came from collusive hotel employees in San Diego providing customer receipts with credit card data to the organization in exchange for methamphetamine and heroin.

The take down of the ring and its participants occurred covertly over a two-month period. Units including SDPD SWAT, U.S. Marshals, Violent Crimes Task Force and the California State Parole's Fugitive Apprehension Team re-enforced the Special Agents and detectives assigned to the San Diego Regional Fraud Task Force during these operations.

The Economic Crimes Division of the San Diego County District Attorney's Office is prosecuting at least 30 Operation Blue Ray defendants who face a variety of charges including identity theft, grand theft, burglary, credit card fraud and counterfeiting. Some defendants face up to 30 years in state prison if convicted. Multiple cases have been filed and defendants are at varying stages of the criminal justice process.

###