

Funny Money: Would-be scammers attempt to pass movie props as the real deal

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BETHALTO – Merchants in the Bethalto area are advised to be on the lookout for fake \$100 bills in the area.

Bethalto Police Chief Craig Welch said his department was working on a report from Runway Lounge near St. Louis Regional Airport in which three individuals – one man and two women – allegedly tried to pass a movie prop as the real deal. A worker from that establishment said she felt something was “off” about the patrons and soon realized the money they handed her was bogus. They had departed the establishment just before she was able to confront them, she said.

Welch said the funny money at Runway was at least the second such cash of fraudulent \$100 bills in the area. The one used at Runway seemed to have come from a movie set, as English text on the bill says “for motion picture use only.” The first case of such money earlier in the week seemed to be Chinese in origin.

“People buy these bills off the internet that look just like the real thing and try to pass them off places,” Welch said. “Some of them have Chinese markings on them.”

The bills with Chinese markings are often used by workers in international commerce to train them on the visuals of American currency. People will often sell them on the internet to people either before or after attempting to remove the Chinese markings, which denote their lack of authenticity.