

Officials unveil program to help St. Paul businesses burned by bad checks

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St. Paul merchants who suffer from bad-check writers will soon get some relief, according to city, county and police officials who announced a new program this morning.

The St. Paul Police Department will work with a private firm called Financial Crimes Services to identify bad check writers, get restitution for victims and increase the accountability of the scofflaws, officials said.

"Writing bad checks is a crime, period, end of sentence," said St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman. "Unfortunately, we don't always have the resources to follow up on such crimes."

The program will not cost the city, county or merchants any money, officials said. Instead, the people writing the bad checks will cover costs.

Ramsey County Attorney Susan Gaertner said that when she's out in the community, she hears more about the problem of worthless checks than murders and other violent crime.

"They want to talk about bad checks, and what are you going to do about it?" Gaertner said. "That's a common refrain."

Scott Adkisson said his Red Wing-based company, Financial Crimes Services, has 116 contracts throughout the state — making it possible for a repeat offender to be recognized more quickly.

For more information about the program, call Financial Crimes Services at 800-880-5420.

Mail a booklet or send them to website