



OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20220

American Bankers Association
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SUBJECT: Fraud Alert - Bogus Treasury Checks, Notes, Bonds and Account Numbers

The Department of Treasury, Office of Inspector General (OIG) has been investigating incidences whereby individuals are using fraudulent checks, promissory notes, bonds and bills of exchange to pay off debts, deposit sums of money or purchase items such as vehicles and real estate. The fraudulent documents often include the bearer or "principal's" name, and generally specify payment of a large sum of money. The Promissory Notes and Bonds will also list the Secretary of the Treasury as the trustee. These are fraudulent, fictitious instruments and are not issued or backed or guaranteed by the U.S. Treasury.

Recently, Treasury OIG has become aware of a different variation of this scheme. Individuals are obtaining routing numbers from two Treasury Bureaus, the Financial Management Service (FMS) and the Bureau of Public Debt (BPD), and also BPD's Treasury Direct Program on the internet and through seminars. These seminars are held throughout the United States, and teach attendees how to create the aforementioned fictitious documents and how to use federal routing numbers. Individuals are now creating false checking accounts using these routing numbers, and are using their social security number as the checking account number. They list the bank as either the FMS or the BPD. As these Treasury Bureaus and the Treasury Direct Program do not offer checking accounts for the public, they will not honor any of these checks. However, because the checks are presented near weekends and holidays, the delays in the check verification process often allows the perpetrator to get away with money they are not entitled to, thereby leaving banks to assume the loss.

Treasury OIG is requesting that you publicize this scheme in your publications and website(s), and alert your members so that the Treasury OIG may more effectively reach a larger audience regarding these instances. If you have any questions, or if your organization has seen these types of documents, please contact the Treasury OIG at 202-927-5260 or 1-800-359-3898. You may also visit our website to see an example of the fraudulent check, bond or promissory note at www.ustreas.gov/inspector-general/fraud-alerts.