

PRESSRELEASE

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Calvin D. Minor

Chief of Police



For Immediate Release:

Date: November 25, 2013

Prepared By/Contact Person: Chief Cal Minor

"Follow Up Leads to Multi-State Fraud Ring"

On November 9, 2013 Officers with the Coalinga Police Department arrested four suspects for cashing fraudulent checks within the City. The checks cashed were drawn on a Bank of America account with a business name of Fruit and Vegetable Growers & Shippers. All four suspects were booked into the Fresno County Jail and this case submitted to the Fresno County District Attorney's office for prosecution.

Coalinga Police Department Investigators continued the investigation of this incident. The investigators determined the business on the checks was fictitious and the bank account was established just to have an account number to place on the checks.

It was also determined that Edwin Ayala who was arrested on November 9, is the leader of this group. Suspect Ayala had provided a false address at the time of his booking. Investigators were able to determine Ayala's correct address and obtained a warrant for a search of his residence in Los Angeles, Ca.

Coalinga Police Department investigators traveled to Los Angeles and with the assistance from Detectives from the Los Angeles Police Department's Commercial Crimes Divisions continued the investigation. On November 22, 2013 Officers and Detectives from the Coalinga and Los Angeles Police Departments served the search warrant at Ayala's residence, 4275 S. Van Ness Ave, Los Angeles CA.

Coalinga Police Department Investigators located at the residence, 3 Computers, printer, fully and partially filled out checks, blank check stock paper, 50 fake identification cards, check writing software and over 300 check stubs all dated November 13, 2013. It is presumed that all the checks associated with the check stubs have been passed on unsuspecting businesses. The total money amounts on these check stubs was \$148,702.00. Additional printed checks for a different bank account and business were found totaling \$12,978.00. A Norma Ayala was at the Los Angeles residence and arrested for various check fraud charges. She was transported and booked into the Los Angeles Police Department's jail.

Additional follow-up determined that Edwin Ayala was on a trip traveling through California and Nevada with two other suspects cashing checks on these fraudulent accounts. Evidence located indicates these suspects have also passed checks in the states of Washington and Oregon with an estimated loss of over 1.8 million dollars in all four states. Investigators from the Coalinga Police Department will be working with a joint Federal, State and local task force based in Los Angeles to determine the full extent of this criminal operation.

Currently wanted by the Coalinga Police Department are:

Edwin Ayala 27 years old

Elsa Perez Ayala 32 years old

Oscar Mejia Cortes 32 years old



Anyone with information on this case is requested to contact Sergeant Rouch or Detective Diaz at 559-974-6734.

“All suspects are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law”

