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SECURITY NEWS

UNDERSTANDING SECURITY

Have You Seen the Polyester Strip in Your \$20 Bills?



In an attempt to foil counterfeiters using desktop publishing and high quality color copiers, the Department of the Treasury's Bureau of Engraving and Printing has been producing currency with a security strip to augment existing security features.

The Federal Reserve System Banks introduced these enhancements in 1990 in \$50's and \$100's and later expanded the program to \$20's and \$10's.

The security thread is a polyester strip embedded in the paper just to the left of the federal reserve seal. The strip is printed with USA and the note's value, e.g., USA 50 or USA 100, in a repeated up-and-down vertical pattern. You can see this thread by holding the bill up to the light. Although it is visible, the thread cannot be

reproduced in the reflected light of copiers or scanners.

Fun Fact:

If you have a bill without a security thread, (the

thread can be removed by ripping the edge of the bill and gently pulling the stripe) it is still legal tender as new and existing non-stripe bills are being co-circulated without recall. However from a security standpoint, if the stripe is missing, it is recommended that you verify authenticity before accepting the bill in question.