



Department of Justice

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**ATLANTA MAN SENTENCED TO OVER 12 YEARS IN
FEDERAL PRISON ON MILLION DOLLAR CHECK THEFT
AND IDENTITY FRAUD SCHEME**

ATLANTA, GA - HAROLD WARDLAW, 41, of Atlanta, Georgia, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Jack T. Camp to serve 12 years, 1 month in federal prison on bank fraud, credit card fraud and aggravated identity theft charges.

“Harold Wardlaw and his co-defendant obtained over \$1 million worth of checks stolen out of the mail stream before they were delivered to the rightful recipients,” said United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates. “They then recruited others to open bank accounts in the business names that were on the checks and withdraw the funds derived from the checks before the victims discovered the thefts.”

WARDLAW was sentenced to 12 years, 1 month in prison to be followed by 5 years of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$1,010,421.40 restitution. WARDLAW was convicted of these charges on January 26, 2010, upon his plea of guilty.

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges and other information presented in court: WARDLAW and/or his co-defendant, Orlando King, obtained checks drawn on commercial accounts that had been stolen from the mail. The checks were written in large dollar amounts and were made payable to business entities. Once they obtained a stolen check, WARDLAW and/or King would register a Georgia corporation in a name that was the same as or similar to the business that was named as the payee on the check. WARDLAW and/or King would then open a bank account under the company’s name, recruit someone else to deposit the check, and withdraw the funds before the theft was discovered by the victim company. The dollar amount of the stolen checks that were obtained by WARDLAW and King was over \$1 million.

WARDLAW and King also obtained stolen Social Security numbers, dates of birth and other identifying information of individual victims. They used that information to open credit card accounts and to establish lines of credit at local banks in the names of the identity theft victims. WARDLAW and King then used the fraudulently obtained credit cards to make fraudulent charges to businesses that King established using other stolen identities, or they would obtain cash by making draws on the fraudulently established lines of credit.

Orlando King pleaded guilty to similar charges on February 3, 2010. His sentencing hearing is currently not set.

This case was investigated by Inspectors with the United States Postal Inspection Service.

Assistant United States Attorney William L. McKinnon, Jr. prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, United States Attorney, or John Horn, First Assistant United States Attorney, through Yvette Comer, at (404) 581-6335. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.justice.gov/usao/gan.