

Sales Clerk arrested for embezzlement

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VICTORVILLE — A sales clerk was arrested after allegedly making 50 fictitious transactions crediting more than \$30,000 from her employer's business to her personal bank account, authorities said.

Detective Al Huff of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Victorville station said that the owner of a local office supply and stationary company received a call this week from the bank that handles their credit card transactions alerting the owner to theft that has been occurring since September 2006.

A Bank of America official saw that one account was racking up credits from returns, but that the account holder had never made purchases in those amounts, Huff said.

Concerned, the owner conducted an audit and found roughly \$30,000 missing, officials said.

"She was creating fictitious invoices from \$60 to over \$1,000 using businesses that had accounts with the store — including the Sheriff's Department, Fish and Game and the Barstow and Hesperia school districts," Huff said. "After the invoice was created she would falsify a return invoice and send the credit to her own checking account. The account holders would never see the transactions, but she got really sloppy."

Huff took the case late in the evening on Tuesday and by Wednesday afternoon detectives served a warrant at the Bartlett Avenue home of Michelle Mirelez, 26, of Adelanto. Once authorities seized bank statements, work statements, invoices, computer equipment, tax documents and numerous delinquency notices from creditors, Mirelez was arrested, Huff said.

"On cases like this you've got to move quickly because once crooks know they're hot they'll move out of the area," Huff said.

Mirelez is said to have admitted to making two or three transactions, but was not aware of the magnitude she'd taken, Huff said. In the last two months more than \$20,000 was credited to her account, he added.

"She got really greedy because she's in debt in a real bad way and this was her way of getting it back. But she has nothing to show for it, she went on a bunch of trips instead of clearing up her credit. The thing that bothered me is that she showed no remorse for the whole thing while the business owner is trying to support his family with that money," Huff said.

Mirelez was arrested on suspicion of felony theft by fraud, grand theft by embezzlement and false impersonation, authorities said.

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