

Consumer Corner

Gel Inks Gelling With Checkmakers, Consumers

(NAPSA)—Though not all consumers are aware of it, the media has recently reported on the risk of stolen checks that can be “washed” and altered. According to the reports, resourceful crooks have been known to steal checks from mailboxes, cover the signatures with cellophane tape, and then wash them in acetone to remove the payee information and dollar amount. The signature remains intact after the tape is removed.

These “washed” checks are then dried and ironed, and rewritten for dollar amounts that are sure to clean out even the most abundant of bank accounts.

While most oil-based and water-based inks have been shown to lift up and wash away when immersed in the acetone or acetone and water mixture (nail polish remover is commonly used), gel-based inks, the kind used in some pens, have been shown to resist the “washing” process and remain embedded in the check.

A spokesman for Pentel said that the company takes these concerns very seriously and is doing everything possible to address the problem. “We have done extensive tests in the past, even before check washing was a mainstream concern, and we will continue to



CHECK WASHING—Gel-based inks have been shown to resist the “washing” process and remain embedded in the check.

test our products to make sure they exceed the standards of quality that consumers expect from Pentel. This includes making sure that our products are safe to use on checks and important documents that must withstand the test of time.”

Experts report that the inks in gel pens, such as Pentel's EnerGel pen in black ink or the blue or black ink Hybrid Gel, Sunburst and R.S.V.P. Gel pens, offer the best available defense against check “washing.”

To learn more about gel pens, visit www.pentel.com.