



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORMER COMMERCE BANK EMPLOYEE SENTENCED FOR FRAUDULENTLY USING CUSTOMERS' CREDIT CARDS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that an Independence, Mo., woman was sentenced today for using her position as a Commerce Bank employee to defraud credit card customers.

Victoria J. Wray, 44, a former security employee with Commerce Bank, was sentenced this afternoon by U.S. District Judge Howard F. Sachs to three months in federal prison without parole. The court also ordered **Wray** to pay restitution in the amount of \$35,535.89. **Wray's** restitution was determined by considering her other relevant conduct in the case, Graves explained, which includes her admission to stealing and using a total of 31 credit cards.

On June 18, 2002, **Wray** pleaded guilty to a one-count information charging her with using a customer's credit card to make more than \$1,000 in purchases. By pleading guilty, **Wray** admitted that between Oct. 21 and Dec. 1, 2000, she fraudulently obtained and used a customer's credit card. **Wray** used a card that was originally mailed to a customer and returned to Commerce Bank with a stamp stating "addressee unknown." After obtaining the credit card, Graves said, **Wray** charged more than \$1,000 in purchases.

As a Commerce Bank employee, **Wray** had been instructed to shred returned credit cards marked "addressee unknown" and enter the account numbers into the bank's system as non-receipts. When the bank learned that the non-receipt credit cards were actually being used, Graves said, an investigation was initiated to determine the source of that usage.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney William L. Meiners. This case was investigated by the United States Postal Inspection Service.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow