

# CORRECTIONS CONTRABAND INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

EMERGING SMUGGLING TECHNIQUE: LIQUID NARCOTICS PRINTED ON PAPER

## TAKE AWAYS:



**Emerging Trend Analysis:** Prisons in Florida, Georgia and Alabama have reported incidents of drug-printed papers being smuggled in legal mail and documents.



**Criminals are using** off-the-shelf inkjet printers to apply liquid narcotics onto paper.

## OVERVIEW

A new and concerning method of distributing drug-infused papers into corrections facilities is beginning to gain popularity in the southeast. Until recently, the primary application method was to spray or dip the paper in liquid narcotics or synthetic compounds. Criminals ranging from local dealers to organized drug gangs employed this technique and it proved to be a highly-effective in eluding traditional screening approaches like light tables, or physical and visual inspection.

However, even as good as this is there are still subtle tell-tale signs that the paper has been tampered with – discoloration, bleeding, or smells. By using inkjet printers criminals are able to improve the application process making the detection even more difficult.

## METHODOLOGY

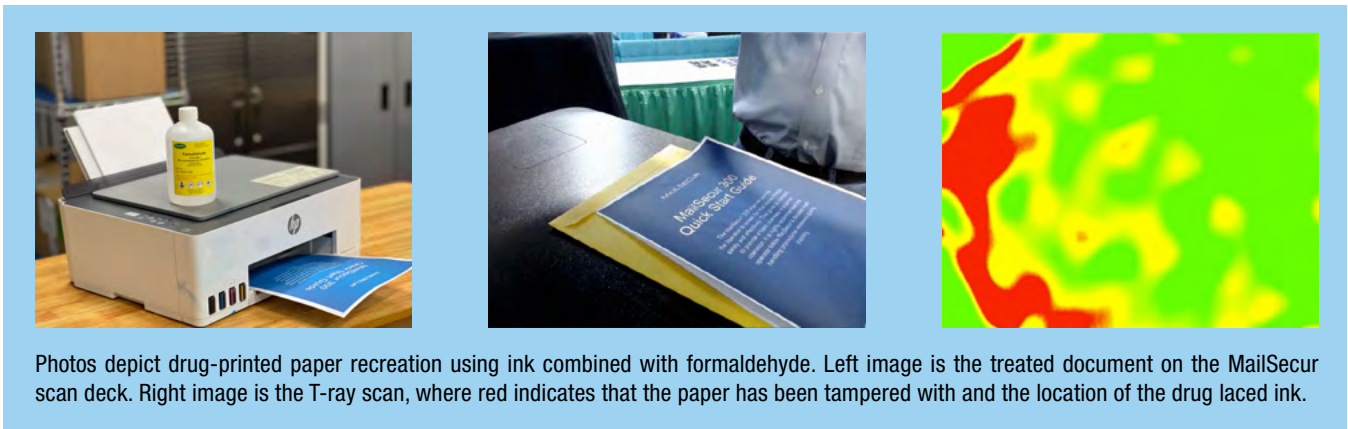
Today's off-the-shelf, household inkjet printer cartridges are designed to allow consumers to refill and replace the cartridges themselves as an alternative to purchasing factory cartridges every time. These DIY kits can be purchased online and step-by-step guides are readily available on how to do it. Criminals are taking advantage of this information to inject liquid narcotics directly into the ink cartridges.

The process starts with the removal of a portion of ink inside the cartridges. Once removed the liquified narcotics, or other chemical intoxicants, are added into the cartridge. The two liquids naturally combine and the ink masks the presence of the contraband. With this being a liquid-based method, it allows for methamphetamine, cocaine, fentanyl, and many more chemicals to be used. With this simple act, any document can be printed using this narcotic-laced ink and it will be undetectable to the human eye.

## CHALLENGES

Due to the screening restrictions imposed by constitutional protections of legal mail, criminals continue to favor smuggling drug-treated papers via fraudulent legal documents. One example is to photocopy the discovery material using this type of printer and allow the infused ink to print the new copy of the legal documents.

Unlike what is commonly seized as drug-treated paper which often has a powder residue, discolorations, detectable odor or bleeding because of the over-saturation with narcotics. As mentioned earlier, this new smuggling tactic eliminates those tell-tale signs of drug-treated papers because the ink is what is being applied to the paper, and that process is normal.



Inkjet printers are designed to be less wasteful, so they use considerably less ink to print which leaves less of a footprint. With this paperwork appearing normal, it will cause intense scrutiny without proper forms of detection and identification.

## SOLUTION

More intent screening and interdiction techniques should be put into place. Any existing screening and identification tools, such as X-ray or ion scanners, are not reliable at finding treated papers. Detection devices such as the MailSecur T-ray screening system highlights any anomalies in the paper itself. In multiple instances correction staffers used MailSecur to detect drug-printed paper. Mail screening processes and procedures should be adhered to when screening legal and personal mail.

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**For more insights on any information shared in this intelligence brief,  
contact the RaySecur Security Advisory Team at [info@raysecur.com](mailto:info@raysecur.com)**

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