



Greg Champagne  
Sheriff

## **St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Department**

### **Special Services Division**

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# **N e w s      R e l e a s e**

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## **DEPUTY ARRESTED FOR FALSIFYING SEATBELT CITATIONS**

Sheriff Greg Champagne reports the arrest of St. Charles Parish Deputy William S. Marciante, Jr. on various charges related to the forgery of seatbelt citations while working grant funded overtime.

As a courtesy, the Sheriff's Office sends letters to drivers when bench warrants are issued for failure to appear in court or pay traffic citations. The letter asks they contact the department to resolve the matter. In late August, a resident responded to this letter stating she had not been stopped for a seatbelt violation nor received a citation as identified in this letter. Based on this information an investigation was initiated.

During the investigation, detectives discovered that between February and May 2011, a total of twenty-one citations were issued by Marciante for seatbelt violations in the names of unsuspecting individuals who were never stopped for these violations. In each instance, Marciante worked overtime made possible through grant funds from the Louisiana Highway Safety Administration to promote seatbelt safety and enforcement.

Evidence discovered during a search warrant of Marciante's patrol vehicle and from reviewing his computer and dash camera video activity shows that traffic stops for the twenty-one victims did not take place and in some instances, Marciante did not work during the times he issued the citations and submitted overtime. Furthermore, over 12 cases have been confirmed through handwriting analysis identifying Marciante as the source of the victim's signatures. Results of handwriting analysis for the remaining cases are pending.

"To say I am disgusted is an understatement," said Sheriff Champagne. "This job is difficult enough. Because of Marciante's actions, the job has gotten a little

harder. It is mind-boggling to understand how someone would be so irresponsible and think it would not eventually be detected. We have checks and balances in place. Once we discovered discrepancies, we immediately investigated and took swift actions. Marciante's arrest should serve as an example to anyone who chooses to victimize the very people we take an oath to protect," Champagne added.

Marciante was taken into custody today and is being held on a \$50,000 bond set by Judge St. Pierre.

La R.S. 14:72 (Forgery; 21 Counts)

La R.S. 14:132 (Injuring Public Records; 21 Counts)

La R.S. 14:134 (Malfeasance in Office; 27 Counts)

La R.S. 14:138 (Public Payroll Fraud; 6 Counts)

Employed with the sheriff's office for 5 years, Marciante's employment was terminated today.

