

Factory was a real money-maker

COUNTERFEIT COINS ‘Unprecedented’ quality of loonies and toonies

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Repentigny police officer Gilles Bergeron shows stamped-out metal rings. The factory in Repentigny manufactures tokens as a front, the RCMP says.

A small factory in Repentigny is being investigated after it was found to contain counterfeit loonies and toonies of a quality the Mounties describe as “unprecedented.”

“Our experts are saying, with regards to the quality of the finished product we found, is that this kind of operation has never been seen before in Canada. The word they use is ‘unprecedented,’ ” RCMP Cpl. Luc Bessette said.

The Repentigny police stumbled upon the fake \$1 and \$2 coins while executing a search warrant as part of an unrelated investigation last month.

Bessette was not able to say how many fakes were found or how many might have been made.

“We don’t know yet if they were producing these things for days or months or years. We do know they had everything from A to Z to make the coins.”

Reproducing the coins is a very difficult process that requires sophisticated equipment and tools, Bessette said.

Investigators are also trying to determine whether the high costs involved in producing the coins were worth the counterfeiters’ efforts.

The factory, located in a commercial building on L’Ecuyer St., manufactured tokens as a front, Bessette said.

The RCMP investigation stemmed from a series of search warrants executed Sept. 14 for Revenue Quebec as part of an investigation into fictitious export companies set up in Repentigny and Montreal. The revenue probe is centred on four people and two numbered companies suspected of filing for more than \$700,000 in false tax reimbursements.

Repentigny police found fake coins that were in the final stages of the counterfeiting process, and the raw materials used to make them. The factory is owned by one of the companies being investigated by Revenue Quebec.

Charges have yet to be filed in the tax investigation, Revenue Quebec said.

One person was questioned about the fake coins but was later released.