



Murderer tried to pawn victim's jewelry

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COLUMBIA, SC (WIS) - Authorities say the people in a Richland County pawn shop helped investigators name a murder suspect.

Elbert Wallace is accused of killing two of his neighbors. Deputies say Wallace brought jewelry stolen from one of the victims to First Cash Pawn Shop.

We talked to the manager who explained the system police use to catch criminals.

Video games, camera, tools, jewelry are just some of the things you'll find at any pawn shop, and it's seller beware, according to manager April Haltiwanger.

"Anything that comes in here everyday is sent to the police department," says Haltiwanger.

As Haltiwanger explains, every transaction done at the First Cash Pawn Shop on Broad River Road is entered into a database called **LeadsOnline**.

The details of each item like the make, model, and serial number is sent to law enforcement agencies across the country. They check it to make sure nothing sold there is reported stolen.

"If they see something suspicious they will call us and ask us to hold these items," says Haltiwanger.

This common practice is how Richland County deputies say they connected the dots in a murder investigation.

Deputies say Elbert Wallace killed a woman Saturday, stole some of her jewelry and pawned it here just three hours before the victim was found.

Haltiwanger remembers Wallace's visit.

"Took his items, let him know what we could do and other than that it was just a normal routine. He didn't act any way out of the ordinary," she says.

She says Wallace was calm and carried on a conversation with other customers, so she didn't think anything out of the ordinary.

It wasn't until Monday when she found out her first-time customer had possibly pawned stolen merchandise.

"They called and said that we had some items here that an individual had brought in," says Haltiwanger.

Investigators asked Haltiwanger not to be specific about a description of the items, so she still doesn't know many details about what Wallace is accused of.

She does know the link between her company and police works.

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