



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 7, 2004

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Dave Druker

Randy Nehrt

WHITE IDENTIFIES POTENTIAL DEFECT IN SOME LICENSE PLATES

(SPRINGFIELD)—Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White announced today that his office has identified a potential defect on a small number of license plates and he has asked a committee to study the problem.

According to White, the plastic coating (referred to as reflective sheeting) on some of the state's new license plates is separating from the steel and has an appearance of bubbling around the identification numbers and letters. White said the re-plating contract guarantees the plates will be replaced at no cost to vehicle owners or Illinois taxpayers. The plates are warranted to maintain their reflectivity for at least five years.

According to White, 13 sets of plates have been replaced to date. Approximately 100 additional license plates with the defect have been identified through efforts of the Secretary of State's office. More than nine million new license plates have been issued since 2001 under the state's re-plating program.

Although very few defective license plates have been identified so far, White has created a committee to further study the scope and cause of the potential problem. The committee consists of representatives from his office and Attorney General Lisa Madigan's office, as well as license plate manufacturers Macon Resources, Inc. and Waldale Manufacturing, and sheeting provider, 3M.

"We have found some license plates that were manufactured during the state's recent re-plating program that have an appearance of bubbling around the identification characters," said White. "I have formed a committee to determine the cause and the scope of this problem. It appears that this is a rare occurrence, but if the problem is any larger we want to catch it now."

The defect causes the license plates to look aged or worn, but in some cases it could cause a loss of reflectivity making the plates difficult to read at night.

Vehicle owners who find this sheeting defect on their license plates may notify the Secretary of State's office by calling 1-800-252-8980 or by visiting the website at www.cyberdriveillinois.com. The plates will be replaced at no cost to the vehicle owner or the state of Illinois.

###