



NEWS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Regional Retail Theft Conference

(Virginia) — Retail theft is no longer a low dollar localized petty crime. Retail crime was at an all time high at \$37 billion in 2005 with Virginia businesses losing well over \$800 Million from theft alone. In Maryland and Virginia, organized groups of retail thieves have transformed the nickel-and-dime crime of shoplifting to a major criminal activity crossing jurisdictional lines. “Organized retail theft gangs travel the 95 corridor. We hope to strengthen the cooperation between the retailers and better prepare them for them such threats,” stated Tom S. Saquella, president of Maryland Retailers Association. “Add the alarming losses from gift and credit card fraud and you have the need for a regional conference to bring a focus and improved collaboration on this often invisible crime.”

The Virginia Retail Merchants Association and the Maryland Retailers Association are holding just such a conference. Laurie Peterson Aldrich, president of Virginia Retail Merchants Association stated, “These serious crimes threaten the livelihood of retailers, their employees, and their customers. Our goal with this program is simple, to reduce these crimes through education and improved collaboration.” The conference brings merchants and retail security professionals together with state and local law enforcement. An excellent program is planned to examine trends in retail theft, especially organized gang operations, and successful strategies against these activities. The program is well suited for owners, managers, loss prevention specialists, their employees and law enforcement.

The Regional Retail Theft Conference will begin on Tuesday, May 22 with a mini trade show at 6:00; dinner will follow with the Deputy Superintendent of the Virginia State Police speaking along with the Superintendent of the Maryland State Police. Wednesday, May 23rd, 2007 from 8:00 to 4:00 there will be a series of speakers at the Holiday Inn Select, 2801 Plank Road, Fredericksburg, Virginia. For more information or to register call the Virginia Retail Merchants Association at 800-232-8762 or go online to www.virginiaretail.org and download a registration form. *News Media are welcome.*

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The Virginia Retail Merchants Association was established in 1905. VRMA is a not-for-profit trade association representing retailers to educate, inform, and serve as a resource. VRMA and its retail member associations represent more than 5,400 retailers and other associated businesses throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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