

Suspicious bail issues investigated

By JESSE DAVIS/The Daily Inter Lake | Posted: Tuesday, December 20, 2011 8:34 pm

The Flathead County Sheriff's Office has identified a man who allegedly bailed several women out of jail with the intent to coerce sexual favors from them.

Sheriff Chuck Curry said detectives have been conducting interviews and hope to have their investigation completed soon.

He said the case wasn't as simple as it seemed because the suspect had not been showing up in person to bail out the women but went through a commercial bond agency.

"It's a little more complicated because, I understand, this isn't just someone showing up with money in their hand," Curry said.

The situation was first raised by attorney Nicholas Aemisegger during court proceedings Dec. 16.

One of his clients had been bonded out of jail by the man and had been told he would revoke his bond payment if she did not acquiesce to his demands. When she did not, he withdrew the payment and it wasn't noticed by Aemisegger, the woman or the court until the morning of the hearing.

"It seems to be a very disturbing pattern of behavior," he said.

What also was suspect about the bond company's notice of revocation of payment was that it did not include any basis for the revocation.

"I think the county attorney's office needs to investigate if you can do this," District Judge Katherine Curtis said during the hearing.

Aemisegger said his client initially was told by the man that he had a wife and children and was a pastor.

"He has bailed out two of my female clients," Aemisegger said after the hearing. "I'm not sure how widespread it is, but it looks like predatory behavior."

He said the man had concerned them slightly from the beginning, but that he "talks a good talk," and didn't seem to be dangerous until Aemisegger heard from his second client. Aemisegger said she talked to other women who had the same experience and then filed a statement with the Sheriff's Office.

Detention Commander Kathy Frame said the situation was not picked up on their end because it had to do with the commercial bond agency.

"Who files [the bond] before that is not our concern, we can't control that," Frame said. "If there's some legal issue about that, it would go through normal investigative channels."

She said the only way such incidents can come to light is if either the victim makes a statement — such as in this case — or if a bondsman files a complaint.

Flathead County Attorney's Office Administrator Vickie Eggum said her office has been made aware of what is going on but is waiting for the investigation report from the Sheriff's Office.