

Washington County received a USD 153,000 grant to help crack down on illegal slots

The Washington County District Attorney's Office received a grant today from the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board. Washington County officials say they plan to use the USD 153,000 grant to crack down on illegal slot machines with the formation of a new task force.

„It's obviously a problem, it really is,“ said Washington County DA, Steven Toprani. „We have meetings with state police, with the vice unit, so there are problems around the county that pertain to this.“

KDKA's Bob Allen reports that the illegal slot machine task force will be similar to a drug task force. Also, while it goes after illegal gaming, the task force will not target social clubs or VFWs in the community that offer small games of chance or video poker machines that are licensed through municipalities or the County Treasurer.

„This is the slots-type machinery that you would see at the casinos here in the state right now,“ said State Representative Tim Solobay. „That's the effect is to stop those illegal activities.“ Authorities say they worry that slot machines will turn up in bars and after-hours clubs with the popularity of slots in casinos.

„I've met with District Attorney Zappala, I've met with several of the other district attorneys around the Commonwealth who have gaming facilities or are about to gain gaming facilities within their jurisdictions. We're all approaching it the same way,“ says Toprani. „But we are seeing an interest. Obviously, municipalities aren't well-equipped to address the problem.“

Officials say the Illegal Slot Machine Task Force should be up and running within a month.