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**GARBAGE COMPANY PROBED OVER FORGERY ALLEGATIONS;
INVESTIGATION: HANDWRITING EXPERTS SAY CHP OFFICER'S
SIGNATURES CERTIFYING CORRECTIONS OF WEST COVINA TRUCK SAFETY
VIOLATIONS ARE PHONY.**

BYLINE: By FRANKI V. RANSOM, TIMES STAFF WRITER

West Covina Police and the California Highway Patrol are investigating a garbage disposal company after allegations surfaced that a CHP officer's signature was forged on safety records.

Jim Griffith, a CHP commercial enforcement officer, said Tuesday he first noticed in mid-March apparently recurring violations in the same West Covina Disposal Company trucks heading for the BKK and Spadra landfills.

Officers routinely inspect trucks headed for BKK in West Covina and Spadra in Pomona. The trucks weigh up to 25 tons when full, and the violations included cracked frames, loose steering, broken brakes and faulty equipment, he said.

When investigators checked court records, they discovered more than 60 verifications that the violations had been corrected, all apparently signed by the same CHP officer. Officials obtained a search warrant last week and found 22 of the company's trucks had defects, said Gary Kershaw of CHP.

No charges have been filed. A receptionist at West Covina Disposal's office said company officials were not available to comment on the investigation.

Kershaw said retired CHP officer Richard Tingwall confirmed signing six of the tickets while he was an employee. Tingwall could not be reached for comment.

Griffith said the other signatures were analyzed by the Los Angeles Police Department's handwriting experts, who contended they had been forged.