

55,000 towels missing from Willowbrook; quiz car wash operators

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stitution for the retarded, which has 1,625 residents, had been suffering a "towel shortage in recent months." She said an internal investigation into the theft is under way, with security officials attempting to determine how the towels were pilfered.

Police said they have no leads in the theft or whether the ring was operating on the grounds.

Guido said thousands of towels might have been sold to car wash operators in other boroughs.

Atamas Kobryn, Willowbrook's deputy director of administration, said lack of security at Willowbrook is "an expensive proposition indeed."

Miss Howe agreed that all institutions have "a problem of this type," but said: "Obviously there is something wrong if someone can walk out of here with that much stuff."

Willowbrook uses about 15,000 towels a week, all laundered in a central facility on state grounds and distributed daily by need to residential buildings.

"But this has left us with only 10,000 or 12,000 towels," Kobryn said, "and we have to keep getting them replaced."



Detective Joseph Guido holds one of the stolen towels recovered by police in their raid of car wash establishments. S.I. Advance Photo by Tony Carannante