



News Release
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release written by: Detective Sergeant Scott Dugan, Financial Crimes, 334-2107

Debit Card Skimming Investigation Update and Consumer Advisement

The Reno Police Department Financial Crimes Unit (FCU) is continuing to investigate what is now in excess of one hundred complaints from persons whose debit card information was compromised at local gas stations and then used at ATM machines to withdraw hundreds and sometimes thousands of dollars. Investigators strongly believe high tech skimming devices are the culprit. These devices are likely being installed on the inside of the gas pumps and completely undetectable from the outside. The suspects are believed to be leaving the devices in place temporarily before moving them to other gas stations within the region. Incidents have occurred at various gas stations throughout the city and there is very little you can do to prevent yourself from being a victim. Therefore, consumers are being advised to do the following:

- Use a credit card whenever possible or use the credit feature of your ATM card so PIN numbers cannot be compromised. Without PIN numbers, the suspects cannot withdraw cash from an ATM.
- Check your account transactions regularly and report fraud to the bank immediately. Each financial institution has its own policy on when a claim must be filed; federal law limits your liability within 60 days of a fraudulent transaction. The sooner you discover and report the fraud, the better chance you have at being refunded your loss.

This latest skimming series in Reno is uncommon. The suspects in our local series are believed to be tied to organized crime as similar incidents are being tracked in Washington and all over the state of California. FCU detectives are working closely with investigators from those states as well as the affected financial institutions in an effort to identify the suspects. FCU detectives are also working with gas station owners to detect and prevent skimming incidents.

Detectives are asking anyone with additional information regarding these cases to contact the Financial Crimes Unit at the Reno Police Department at (775) 334-2144 or the Secret Witness Program at (775) 322-4900. Information can be provided to Secret Witness anonymously.