

Steamboat Springs Police Warn Of Suspicious Pay-At-The-Pump Activity

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO-Steamboat Springs Police are warning consumers to stay alert for suspicious devices when paying-at-the-pump. The caution comes after the discovery of two suspicious devices recovered from a local gas station consistent with the use of a 'skimming equipment.'

On October 12, 2017 at approximately 10:19 am an employee at Western Convenience (500 South Lincoln Avenue) notified police to the suspicious devices attached to the inside of the fuel pumps. Western Convenience management was alerted when a representative from Colorado Division of Oil and Public Safety (CDOPS) was performing a check on the pumps that day. Western Convenience management was unable to discern the last occasion their employees checked the pumps for suspicious devices since CDOPS previous inspection in July 2016.

Skimming devices read the information stored on the magnetic strip while the card passes through an attached device. Depending on the financial institution, the magnetic strip generally contains all the information displayed on the card as well as additional information about the account. The stolen information is often used in criminal activities. The skimming device can be attached directly over the card reader or concealed within the gas pump panel. It is nearly impossible to detect by users.

"The most effective way to guard against fraud is through close monitoring of your account activity," says Commander Annette Doplick. She encourages customers to take advantage of their institutions' early-warning alerts and offers the following guidance:

Guidance for Credit Card Skimmer Fraud Awareness

- If you can, use gas pumps and ATMs that are in plain view of passersby and surveillance cameras. They are less likely to be targeted by criminals.
- When possible, use the same ATM and gas pumps so you become familiar with the appearance of the card reader.
- Skimmers often disrupt the smooth entry/exit of the card. If the card action seems jerky or uneven, notify the vendor and treat the transaction as suspicious.
- Inspect the card reader and the area near the PIN pad for any suspicious devices or tampered-with equipment.



- If using a debit card, attempt to conceal the PIN or zip code from visual detection by covering the keypad with your hand as you enter it.
- Look at other nearby gas pumps or ATM card readers to see if they match the one you are using.
- For ATMs, inspect the device - look for uneven colors or loose PIN pads - and tug on card slot before insertion.
- Avoid gas pumps where the tamper-safe security seal affixed to the pump has been broken.

While there is no video surveillance of this incident, anyone with information regarding this suspicious activity is asked to contact the Steamboat Springs Police at 970.879.1144.

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