



News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Credit Card Skimmers Found at Local Gas Stations

The Lake Havasu City Police Department wants to make the community aware of credit card skimmers that have recently been found at two local gas stations, one in the 2800 block of Chemehuevi Blvd and the other in the 1000 block of Acoma Blvd. S. An employee at each station located the skimmers during a security check of the pumps. At this time, no victims have come forward to report their credit card information being compromised.

Surveillance cameras captured two of the most recent incidents. Those photos can be viewed on the LHCPD App as well. Two unknown males driving a white 4-door Toyota, possibly a Camry, installed the device on one of the pumps. The license plate had been removed or covered up. In the second incident, the same individuals driving a gray 4-door Toyota Camry installed the skimmer device.

Similar skimming devices were located at several local gas stations back in November of 2018 and multiple reports were taken from victims of credit card fraud. In December of 2018, the Lake Havasu City Police Department provided free training to multiple local gas station owners and employees to help identify and conduct security checks of their gas pumps.

Credit Card skimming is the act of attaching an illegal device that copies and stores consumer credit card information to retail devices such as ATM's, fuel dispensers, and point of sale systems, according to the Weights and Measures Service Division. The

copied information can be retrieved wirelessly and almost immediately by the criminal and used to perform fraudulent transactions using the stolen credit card information.

Credit card skimmers can come in different forms. Attached is a picture of one recently discovered, however an internet search will uncover many other types of skimmers.

Here are several tips to help prevent from becoming a victim:

- 1) Always use credit cards to pay for gas at the pump. If you have to use a debit card, run it as credit to avoid having to enter a PIN number which could allow a criminal to withdraw money from your bank account.
- 2) Wiggle the exterior of the credit card reader before inserting your credit card. (This tip also applies to ATM's) If any part comes loose, do not use it.
- 3) Some gas stations use tamper resistant security tape. Make sure the tape is not voided or broken. However, counterfeit stickers have also been used by suspects to cover up the broken tape so this is not a fool proof safeguard. You can look at other pumps to see if the security tape is the same.
- 4) Use pumps in well-lit areas and that are positioned in a clear view of store employees.
- 5) Report your concerns and any suspicious activity to station employees or law enforcement.
- 6) Sign up for alerts from your credit card company and monitor card activity on a regular basis.
- 7) Trust your instincts. If something doesn't appear right, do not use the pump.
- 8) Pay the station attendant directly.

Additional consumer tips about how to protect yourself from fraud can be found at the Arizona Attorney General website www.azag.gov/consumer/card-skimmers. A "gas skimmers" map updated by the Department of Weights and Measures is also located on the Attorney General's website showing locations around Arizona where skimmers have been found. If you discover you have been a victim, you are encouraged to contact the Lake Havasu City Police Department.

Anyone with information is encouraged to contact the Lake Havasu City Police Department. Silent Witness will pay a cash reward for information leading to the arrest of

the suspect(s) involved. Anonymous information can be called into Lake Havasu Silent Witness at 928-854-TIPS (8477). Citizens can utilize the police department's anonymous text messaging tip service by texting LHCPD and your message to "CRIMES" or 274637. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through a web page based tip service at www.tipsoft.com or via the "TipSubmit" mobile application. Anyone using Android, Windows or Apple platforms can download the LHCPD app and submit a tip through the app as well.

Public Information Officer: Sergeant Tom Gray (928) 855-1171

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