



SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT

155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

MEDIA RELEASE



DATE/TIME: January 10, 2019

LOCATION: City of Santa Cruz

TOPIC: Santa Cruz Police - Card Skimming Consumer Alert

CASE NUMBER: 19S-09670

INFORMATION:

Santa Cruz Police Alert Residents About Credit Card Skimming

On December 28, 2018, a bank in the city reported several customers had complained that they could not fit their card into the ATM slots. The bank's ATM technician discovered card skimming devices inserted into the card slots. The bank reviewed customer transactions to prevent the potential for theft. The Santa Cruz Police took custody of the skimmers, and the devices booked as evidence.

Below are surveillance photos of a person of interest related to the case. If you recognize or have information about this individual, contact Officer Northrup at (831) 420-5838 or

Bnorthrup@cityofsantacruz.com



Santa Cruz Police reminds citizens to be diligent about checking their credit and debit card statements. We also want to encourage businesses with card readers to test their equipment. Detectives advise that if you locate a skimming device, please do not touch or remove the device. Immediately contact the police and notify the manager.

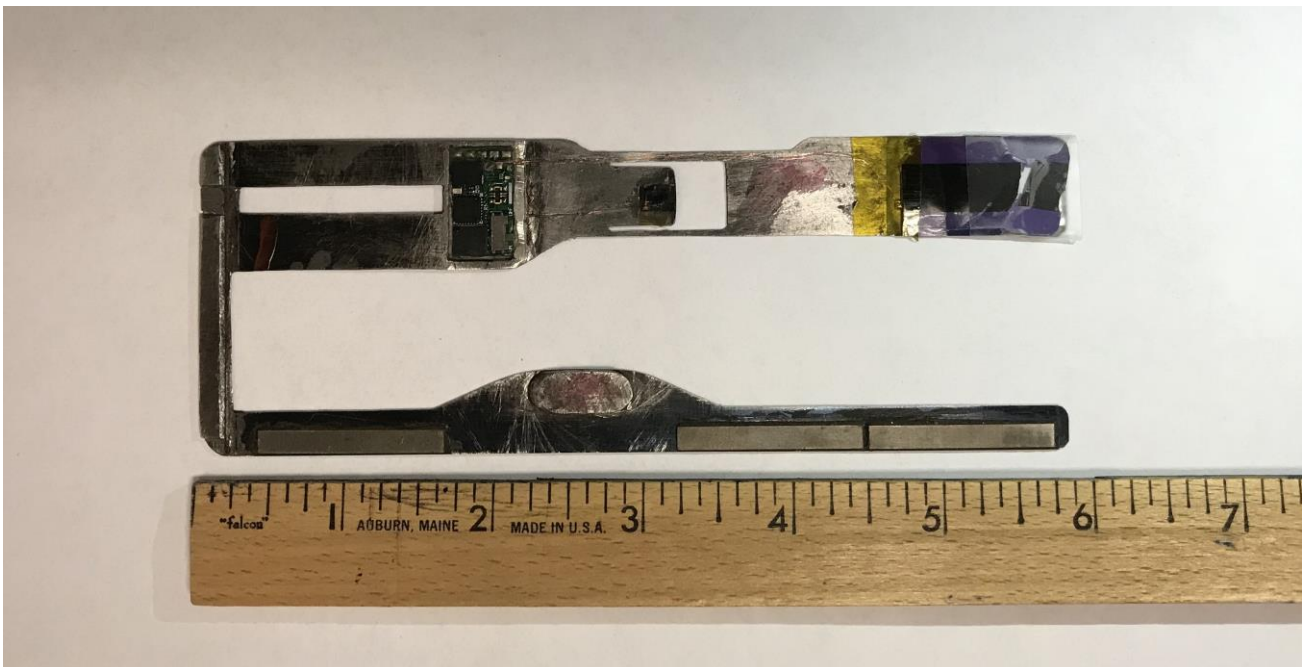
Santa Cruz Police have reason to believe there is a possibility of more skimmers set up at different ATMs and card readers. The skimming devices can be attached externally or internally to an ATM or a gas pump card reader for illegally gathering the account information. Thieves hide skimmers in plain sight and consumers using the machines would likely never notice the device. Thieves use stolen debit or credit card financial data to make new cards and are then using those new cards at businesses and financial institutions around town.

How to Avoid Being Skimmed

Advice to Business Owners: Officers ask business owners and managers with electronic card readers to regularly and carefully check their equipment. The skimmers found recently are very small and not easily noticed.

Advice to Consumers: Officers encourage residents to be aware of signs that indicate skimming is occurring or has occurred.

- Inspect the ATM, gas pump, or credit card reader before using it...be suspicious if you see anything loose, crooked, or damaged, or if you notice scratches or adhesive/tape residue. You can wiggle the card insert location as well to make sure nothing comes apart.
- When entering your PIN, block the keypad with your other hand to prevent possible hidden cameras from recording your number.
- After swiping a card, you receive the "Transaction could not be completed" message or the device asks you to re-swipe multiple times. If your card isn't returned immediately after the transaction contact the financial institution that issued the card.
- Look for suspicious vehicles near the ATM or for people hovering nearby watching over the skimming device.



Attached photos of the recovered skimmer device, person of interest & detail makeup of a skimmer

For additional information, contact: Joyce Blaschke

Phone: (831) 420-5844

Anonymous tips can also be sent to the police department through our Tip Line (831) 420-5995, or from our Website; www.santacruzpolice.com. Tipsters can also submit an anonymous tip via our smartphone app or from an SMS text. Visit our Website for instructions.