



**SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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**DATE/TIME:** January 17, 2019

**LOCATION:** 1725 Mission Street

**TOPIC:** Card Skimmers at Gas Pumps

**CASE NUMBER:** 19S-00276

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### **INFORMATION:**

#### **Santa Cruz Police Warn Residents of Card Skimming Devices Found in Gas Pumps**

On January 13, 2019, a technician inspecting a malfunctioning gas pump at the APCO Gas Station at 1725 Mission Street located a possible credit card skimmer. During the investigation, an SCPD Officer recovered three credit card skimmers from different gas pumps at the APCO station.

This type of device is undetectable from the outside of a gas pump. The machines do not show any outward signs of forced entry. A technician discovered the card-skimmer only after opening the service door. Customers would not be able to detect the gas pump was compromised until unauthorized charges appear on their financial statement.

Investigators continue to work with the business owner to determine how long the card-skimming devices were operating inside the gas pumps. Detectives have not received any reports where victims suspected their credit or debit cards were compromised at this location.

The Santa Cruz Police Department is encouraging customers who have used either gas station while paying at the pump with a credit or debit card to cancel their credit or debit card and monitor their credit card statements and banking records for fraudulent activity.

Older gas station pumps are more susceptible to this type of skimming device fraud when paying at the pump. Modern gas pumps have security features that make placing a card-skimmer inside them more difficult.

No matter where you gas up, all pumps should have a security tape on the external part of the pump near the access door that leads to credit card reading area. Also, watch out for external suspicious card readers. Pull or tug on the card reader before using it. If it detaches or feels loose, do not insert your card.

Santa Cruz Police want to disseminate this information to all. Please spread the message to others. Card skimming devices can remove credit card information from the card after inserted. The data is available immediately to the perpetrator that implanted the device.

SCPD would like to remind everyone to check your bank account transactions or credit card statements regularly. If you notice charges that you didn't authorize, immediately report it to your bank or credit card company.

Sign up for text-alerts through your financial institution, so you are immediately made aware of purchases made on your card.

### 3 PHOTOS ATTACHED

For additional information, contact: Joyce Blaschke

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

### PHOTOS

Case 19S-00276 Card Skimmer Found in Gas Station Pump



Case 19S-00276 Card Skimmer booked as evidence



Internet Photo: Example Gas Pump Security Tape



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