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NEWS RELEASE

AG Schimel, FBI, and DATCP Warn Consumers About Credit Card Skimming

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MADISON, Wis. – The number of credit card skimming devices that have been discovered at gas stations by law enforcement has been increasing in recent weeks and Attorney General Brad Schimel, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) want consumers to take heed.

Credit card skimmers are small, nearly invisible devices that capture sensitive data and are inserted into credit card processing machines by criminals, going undetected by gas station and retail store proprietors. Once the credit or debit card information has been stored on the device, criminals can use the data to make fraudulent purchases.

“Wisconsinites always need to be careful when handling sensitive bank and credit card information, but unfortunately, many of our friends, neighbors, and relatives are unknowingly giving this information to fraudsters through skimming schemes,” noted Attorney General Schimel. “Local, state, and federal law enforcement are working hard to catch these criminals, but there are actions consumers can take to protect themselves.”

Consumers can protect themselves against this type of fraud by:

- Paying inside, instead of at the pump.
- Looking for signs of tampering. Often times, gas pumps have security seals and locks installed by gas station owners for the customer’s protection.
- Using the pumps closest to the building where it is less likely a fraudster has installed a skimming device.
- Reviewing credit card statements for suspicious activity and reporting it to your bank or credit card issuer.

If you believe you have been a victim of credit card skimming, contact local law enforcement and your bank or credit card issuer.

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The Wisconsin Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association is aware of the problem, is aiding gas stations and retailers in preventing this type of theft, and is fully cooperating with all law enforcement investigations.

The FBI, the Wisconsin Department of Justice-Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI), and DATCP's Weights and Measures Bureau are collaborating on a review of the recent complaints of credit card skimming at gas pumps and ATMs statewide. This collaboration is being managed by the Wisconsin Statewide Information Center (WSIC) and DCI is requesting that agencies with information regarding skimming incidents contact WSIC.

A [fact sheet](#) on card skimmers is available on the DATCP website.

Additionally, an informational guide from DATCP's Bureau of Consumer Protection, informing victims of how to file an identity theft complaint, is attached.

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