

THE CRIME OF THE FUTURE?

Illegal debit/credit card skimmers have been found in various parts of Ohio over the past few months.

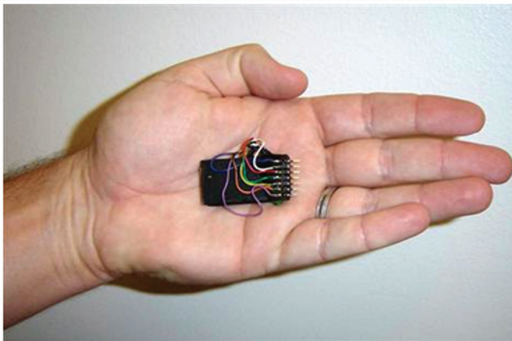
Security experts say that skimming, could be netting crooks as much as \$3 billion a year in the US.

During routine station inspections, various County Weights and Measures officials have found credit card skimming devices illegally installed inside gas pumps at numerous locations.

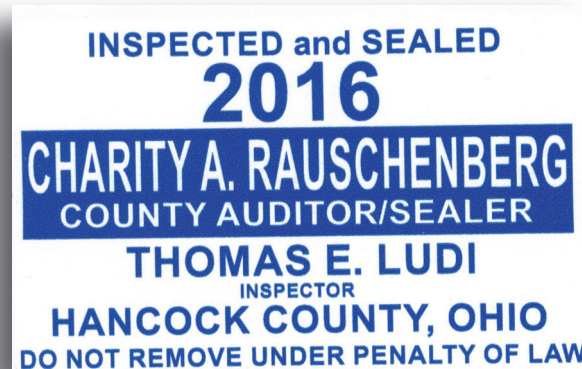
Luckily, Hancock County has not been hit yet!

All gas station owners, managers, attendants, as well as consumers are advised to take steps to guard against these scams.

Don't become a victim of gas pump skimmer scams!



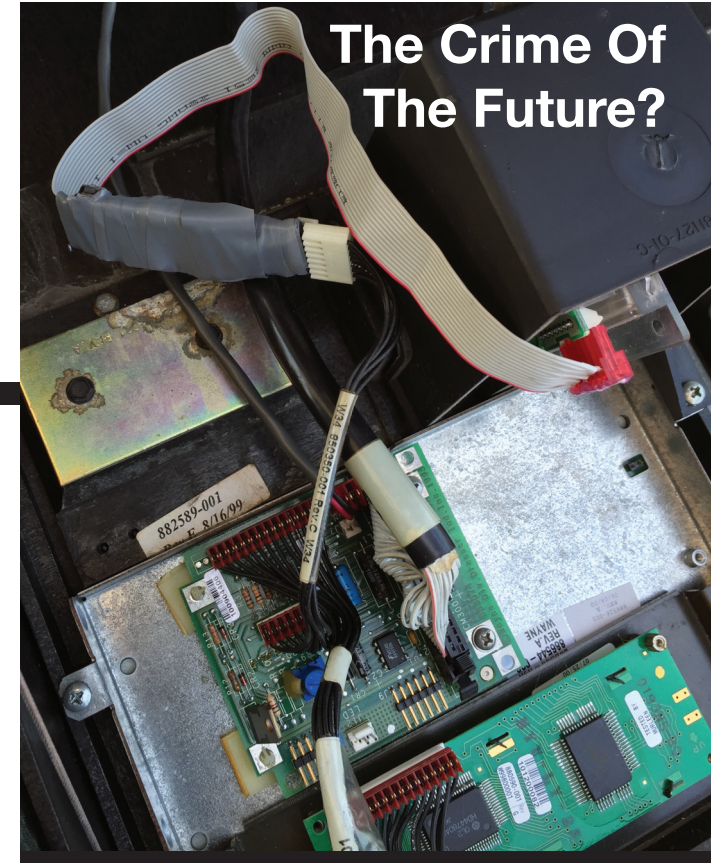
For more information or to report a gas pump problem, contact the Hancock County Auditor's Office, Weights and Measures Division at (419) 424-7015.



Sample Auditor's Seal

GAS PUMP SKIMMER SCAMS

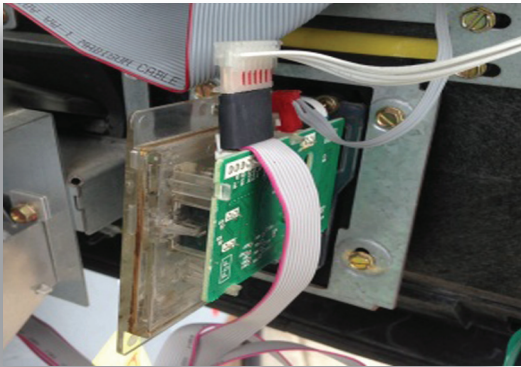
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**Hancock County Auditor
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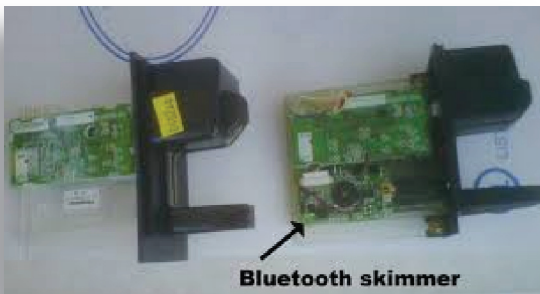
CARD SKIMMING DEVICES

Skimmers are inconspicuous electronic devices that thieves install either inside or outside of a gas pump. These small and inexpensive devices record card numbers as you pay for your fuel.



The devices are wired to the card reader and keypad and can record account numbers and PIN's when a customer swipes their debit or credit card at the pump. A thief can install one of these devices in less than a minute.

Data obtained by these devices can be used to create bogus cards to access a consumer's bank account or to just make purchases.



PREVENTING THESE SCAMS

County weights and measures staff train to look for anything suspicious when performing gas pump inspections. But, a periodic inspection by county officials only goes so far in preventing card skimming scams.

The Hancock County Auditor is raising awareness with local store owners and attendants on how to inspect their pumps and to notice illegal activity.



WHAT MORE CAN BE DONE?

The Hancock County Auditor is suggesting that station owners to use security strips that will show void when removed or tampered with. Gas pumps should be opened up and the internal mechanisms examined regularly by station staff.

The most effective way to stop these scams is to install better, more secure locks on every pump. Better locks will prohibit unauthorized access to a gas pump's interior components.

WHAT CAN CONSUMERS DO?

- NEVER use a debit card when paying for gas at the pump. The thieves can steal PIN numbers.
- Report any unusual activity or anything that looks out of place.
- Monitor monthly bank and credit card statements for fraudulent charges.
- Use cash to pay for purchases whenever possible.
- If you believe you have been a victim of skimmer scam, notify local law enforcement, bank, and credit card issuer immediately.

