

DNA – AN UNLIKELY TOOL IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CREDIT CARD SKIMMING FRAUD

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Paying at the pump for gas is convenient, but that convenience comes with a risk. Anyone who drives a vehicle and needs to refuel can become a victim of credit card skimming fraud. Credit card skimming fraud is on the rise and skimming devices are becoming more difficult to detect using advanced technology to steal a person's identity. Hundreds of skimming devices are discovered attached to gas pumps weekly in the United States. Unfortunately, most of these devices aren't discovered until it is too late and unassuming people realize they have already been victimized.

This presentation will provide general information regarding the advanced criminal network centered around credit card skimming devices and discuss a multi-disciplinary pilot study conducted at the Houston Forensic Science Center between the Forensic Biology/DNA section and Latent Print section. The results of the pilot study sparked a policy change in our organization and highlighted the benefits associated with probabilistic genotyping.

The goal of this presentation is to raise awareness and minimize victimization of credit card fraud associated with skimming devices and to showcase some unexpected success associated with DNA testing on skimming devices.