



Newcastle E-Alert

DATE: May 18, 2007
TO: Community E-Alert Recipients
FROM: Chief Melinda Irvine
SUBJECT: E-Alert # 07-07 – False ATM Card Reader

At 7:30 PM on May 17, 2007, a false front was found on the BECU Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) located in the QFC parking lot on Coal Creek Parkway. A camera was also recovered which had been positioned to read personal identification numbers (PIN) as customers entered them. Newcastle Police have collaborated with the King County Sheriff's Office Fraud Unit and BECU Security for the follow-up investigation.

If you suspect you may have been a victim, review your statement for false transactions or contact your bank.

To help prevent loss of your information in this manner, we encourage you to use the same ATM whenever possible to be more likely to recognize machine alterations. Be cautious of any changes you see on the machine. In addition, when using debit card readers, such as those at gas stations, check the devices for potential alterations before using the pay at the pump feature.

The equipment used to capture your ATM card number and PIN is disguised to look like regular ATM equipment. The "skimmer" is mounted to the front of the normal ATM card slot that reads the card number. A disguised wireless camera is mounted nearby to view PIN entries. The thieves copy the cards and use the PIN to withdraw money from customers' accounts. They often monitor the activity from a nearby location.

If you observe suspicious activity, please call 911 to have an officer respond. If you have any other information that may assist in this investigation, please call Crystal Byelick or Sergeant Steve Davis in the King County Sheriff's Office Fraud Unit at (206) 296-4280 or the Newcastle Police Department at City Hall, (425) 649-4444, ext. 120.