

NEWS RELEASE



GARDEN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

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GARDEN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT ISSUES WARNING ON INCREASING THEFT PATTERNS TARGETING ATM WITHDRAWAL VICTIMS

The Garden City Police Department is alerting the community to a concerning trend of thefts involving individuals targeted after making ATM withdrawals. This alarming pattern, known as "Bank Jugging," has been recently reported, and it poses serious risks to unsuspecting victims.

Bank Jugging occurs when an individual is followed immediately after withdrawing money from an ATM or bank. Thieves often watch for victims to leave their vehicles unattended, exploiting the moment to break in and steal cash and valuables left inside. A recent incident highlights this issue, where a victim was followed from a bank on Jericho Turnpike to a local gym in Garden City, resulting in the theft of cash and personal items from their vehicle.

In addition to Bank Jugging, the Garden City Police Department is also seeing two other related scams:

1. **Vehicle Damage Scam:** In this scheme, a perpetrator approaches a victim, claiming their vehicle has a flat tire or is otherwise damaged. While the victim is distracted, another accomplice enters the vehicle and steals cash and other valuables. In some instances, the scammer may intentionally damage a tire to force the victim to stop and assess the situation.
2. **Money Drop Scam:** This tactic involves a thief approaching a victim as they are entering their vehicle, suggesting that they have dropped money. As the victim searches for the "lost" money, another accomplice takes the opportunity to steal cash from the victim's vehicle.

The Garden City Police Department urges the public to take the following precautions to reduce the risk of falling victim to these types of theft:

Be Vigilant: Always be aware of your surroundings when withdrawing money. Remain alert for anyone who may be watching you or following you after leaving the bank or ATM.

Avoid Distractions: Refrain from using your phone immediately after making a withdrawal, and do not engage with individuals who claim you have vehicle issues or have dropped money.

Conceal Your Cash: As soon as you withdraw cash, place it securely in your pocket or handbag before leaving the ATM or bank.

Observe for Suspicious Behavior: Be on the lookout for individuals loitering around the bank or ATM during your visit.

Vary Your Banking Routine: Change the time and locations of your ATM and Bank withdrawals to avoid establishing predictable patterns.

Check for Followers: After completing a withdrawal, take a moment to check if anyone is following you.

Drive Directly to Your Destination: If you suspect that you are being followed, report it to the police immediately or drive straight to the nearest police station for assistance.

The Garden City Police Department is committed to ensuring the safety and security of our community. By following these guidelines and staying alert, we can work together to prevent these thefts from impacting our residents.