

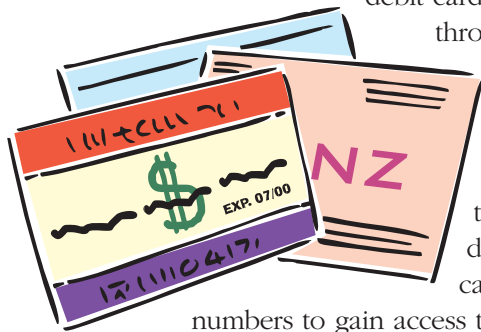


Market Garage

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Pump Patrol – Stop Skimmer Crimes at the Source

Skimmer crimes are on the rise nationwide. Credit and debit card data is being stolen through electronic devices that are attached over the actual card reader. Matching the look of the real reader, they are difficult to detect. These devices capture account and pin



numbers to gain access to the cardholder's bank account or to make illegal purchases. Technically savvy criminals have started installing wireless transmitters inside of the pumps, and the skimmer goes virtually undetected.

A review of the Market Garage program claim activity shows that the impact of skimmer crimes is two-fold. Not only do these crimes have a financial impact on your valued customers, but many times result in vandalism to the pumps. Research shows skimmer crime is growing more frequent among gas stations and not just at ATMs.

According to a recent article in USA Today, Thieves Skim Credit Card Data at Fuel Pumps, by Katharine Lackey, card skimmer crime has grabbed the attention of the Secret Service Financial and Electronic Crimes Units. California, Washington, Pennsylvania, Nevada and Delaware have higher than average skimmer crime activity. With this type of crime spreading rapidly, businesses in all states should contact local law enforcement agencies to learn about local trends and crime prevention programs that may be available.



In addition to law enforcement strategies, the following recommendations may help reduce the likelihood of card skimmer crime and vandalism at your pumps:

- Educate your employees about card skimmer crimes.
- Watch for people tampering with access panels and attempting to shield their activities.
- Place seals on accessible compartments, and check them frequently for tampering.
- Install alarms on pumps to alert the attendant if someone attempts to open it.
- Encourage clientele to pay by credit instead of debit. Skimmer devices capture debit card account and pin numbers to give criminals access to victims' bank accounts.
- Conduct background checks on all employees. Because there is a reported history of these crimes being committed by employees, it is important to take measures to hire honest employees that will work with you to prevent crime.
- Position surveillance cameras prominently and ensure they have a clear view of gas pump activity.

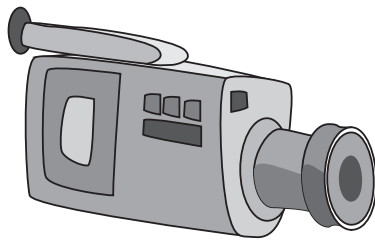
Cost-Effective Crime Prevention

In today's economy, every dollar counts. As a small business owner, the costs for keeping your business safe from crime can add up quickly. Crime-related claims are some of the more frequently reported losses we receive from Markel clientele. By identifying cost-efficient risk management strategies you can help save money and prevent losses at the same time.



Try these strategies from The Resource Center for Buying a Gas Station/C-Store™ (www.howtobuyagasstation.com) to help prevent crime losses:

- Install bright outdoor lighting. Criminals like the dark and will generally not victimize establishments that are well lit.
- Minimize hedges, fences, and other sight-blocking features.
- Review police blotter records for an informed picture of crime in the area.
- Post signs to direct attention to highly visible surveillance cameras inside and outside your store. Cameras help deter stick-ups, shoplifting, and pilfering by your own employees.
- Retain video records. Consult an attorney for guidelines on how long you should keep video surveillance. It may require a slight financial commitment but can prove to be a valuable crime prevention tool.
- Install the latest equipment to monitor your inventory and detect any losses. This also proves to be beneficial for reporting inventory losses due to a crime or fire.
- Defend your building with good locks, and alarmed exit and office doors.
- Limit "drive-offs" by installing prominent outdoor video cameras and automated payment systems that require customers to pay in advance at the pump or inside. (This is also a good deterrent to reduce skimmer crimes, discussed in the next article.)

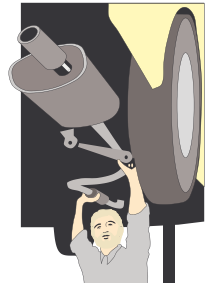


Quality Control Supports Loss Reduction Too!

Strong quality control procedures protect your business reputation, help control the cost of doing business, and support a good risk management strategy. Claims involving improper repair allegations average \$7,000 to stratify all parties involved. While the cost associated with these claims fluctuates due to a variety of circumstances, a good quality control process is important to minimize costs for everyone involved.

You can take the following proactive steps to help prevent these claims from happening at your business:

- **Provide a written appraisal.** Have customers sign and date your estimate to validate their agreement to do the work.
- **Stick to your estimate.** Always contact customers about any unforeseen costs or additional repairs that need to be done, and obtain their permission before proceeding.
- **Never service a vehicle that you do not know how to service.** Many specialty and newer model vehicles require service to be performed by the dealership. Improper removal of specialty parts can result in extensive damage. If you damage one of these parts, let the customer know so it can be taken to a dealership for immediate repair.
- **Check your work!** The importance of checking your work cannot be understated. Establish a quality control procedure, and share it with your customers. The service manager or designated technician should review all work. If you are the only mechanic at your shop, take time to double-check your work. Pay particular attention to tires, oil plugs, and the amount of oil in the engine.
- **Follow specifications.** Many parts require a specific torque level for properIf you don't know



Markel Can Help

Have a safety or risk management question or concern?

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