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U.S. Secret Service Kickstarts Operation Targeting Gas Station Card Skimmers

The U.S. Secret Service announced the start of a new operation called "Operation Deep Impact" designed to hunt down and remove credit card skimmers from fuelling station pumps all across the U.S. "More than 400 gas stations in 16 states have already been searched and nearly 200 skimmers recovered from pumps," says the press release. "Secret Service agents, in partnership with fuel companies and law enforcement, will continue to locate and recover illegal credit card skimming devices throughout the holiday." The skimmers are designed to be embedded within the body of fuelling pumps, and they steal the data sent by a client's credit card when contacting the bank servers during the payment procedure. The Secret Service says that gas stations are a top target for bad actors who use skimmers to steal credit cards because of a large number of customers using them and the low risks of being discovered involved in installing the skimmers and recovering them to collect the stolen data. "An estimated 54 million Americans will travel across town or across the country for Thanksgiving, and while doing so, many will buy gas for their cars," said the Secret Service. "These annual increases in motor travelers on the road during holidays mean bigger paydays for card-skimming financial criminals who target victims at fueling stations."