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### **DA'S OFFICE OFFERS TIPS TO AVOID IDENTITY THEFT AFTER 'MASTERFUL' ATM SHOULDER SURFER CONVICTED**

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office wants to remind the public about the vulnerabilities existing each day that could lead someone to become a victim of identity theft.

On May 3, 2018, Arthur Stefan Lefco, 43, was sentenced to 19 months in prison, 24 months of post-prison supervision and a 24 month period of probation. He pleaded guilty on February 5, 2018 to two counts of aggravated identity theft.

"In this case, the defendant would act as if he was a customer in line waiting to use an ATM," said Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Kevin Demer, who prosecuted this case. "As he waited, he would watch other customers and attempt to memorize their personal identification numbers as they were entered into the keypad. Once the customer left the ATM, the defendant would quickly go up to the machine before the last session timed out and would enter the customer's PIN, giving him essentially unlimited access to cash."

The Portland Police Bureau worked closely with the financial industry to identify the ATM locations Lefco was targeting in northeast and downtown Portland. He was arrested on June 26, 2017 after detectives assigned to the Portland Police Bureau's White Collar Crimes Unit conducted a surveillance mission.

Demer, who specializes in financial crime prosecution, encourages the public to take active steps while using an ATM so they do not become victims of identity theft. "ATMs are tremendously convenient, but if people aren't careful when using them, theft of funds can happen in a matter of seconds."

- Before approaching an ATM, check your surroundings for anyone who appears suspicious or who is loitering;
- Check the ATM's card reader to ensure no skimming or unauthorized card readers have been installed;
- Check the machine itself for any hidden cameras;
- Continue to check your surroundings while at the machine – avoid being distracted;
- When you are finished with your transaction, never walk away from the machine until it has reset itself for a new customer;
- If given an option to conduct a second transaction, always click "no" before leaving the machine;
- Report any unusual activity or persons to bank employees or local law enforcement.

The investigation into Lefco revealed that between May 10, 2017 and June 25, 2017, he attempted access on 53 separate victims. He was successful accessing customer's accounts 18 times in that 47 day period. Lefco made a payment of \$10,516 in restitution.

At his sentencing, Lefco told the court that he didn't see the human cost of stealing the money. He told Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Kenneth R. Walker that he was "trying to beat the machine" and that he didn't see he was taking money from people who needed that cash to pay for rent or food.

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