



DenverDA

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NEWS RELEASE

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FRAUD ALERT

From the Office of Denver District Attorney Mitch Morrissey

DENVER DISTRICT ATTORNEY WARNS METRO AREA ABOUT CRIME RING TARGETING ELDERLY RESIDENTS IN ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

Denver District Attorney Mitch Morrissey wants to warn people in the metro area – especially those living and working in senior living facilities – to be on the lookout for thieves who have been stealing credit cards out of apartments and rooms of residents in senior living facilities. The suspected ring of male thieves who present themselves as females, enter the facilities wearing medical scrubs; making it more likely they will “fit in”. They enter the elderly residents’ rooms when they are away for meals or activities and take credit cards. The thieves use the credit cards to purchase gift cards at large retail businesses including Wal-Mart and K-Mart. One of the suspects has been arrested and one is still at-large.

Approximately 20 cases have been identified in the Denver Metro area spanning from May 1, 2009 to September 11, 2009, with losses estimated to be in the range of \$50,000 to \$100,000. These Colorado cases are believed to be connected to a larger, well organized nation-wide criminal ring that has committed similar crimes in Louisiana, Georgia, Texas, Kansas, and Alabama, as well as Colorado since April 5, 2009.

Markinious Kettrell Hartfield (dob: 2/11/81) was arrested this week in Colorado Springs and is out on bond. Hartfield was convicted of similar crimes in 2006 in Louisiana. The second suspect is believed to be a black male who presents as a female, between 20 – 30 years old and approximately 95 lbs.

“It is important to lock your doors and to put your valuable items, including checks, credit cards, and anything with your social security number on it, in a safe, non-obvious place in your home or apartment. One step better is to keep these items in a locked compartment. Thieves use all kinds of disguises to commit crimes. They can be very clever and cunning,” warns District Attorney Mitch Morrissey. “It is critical that we take every step possible and reasonable to provide our seniors with safe places to live.”

If you have information related to these crimes, please contact DA Investigator Ralph Stevenson at the Denver DA's office, 720-913-9000.