

Dept. of Transportation: Recognized for stopping fraud scam

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NOTE: November 15-21, 2020 is International Fraud Awareness Week

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Compliance, Audit and Fraud Unit recently received recognition for its initiative to detect fraud and enhance the integrity of DMV products. The unit uncovered a fraud ring in the Madison community, which led to investigations in other states. In recognition of their work, DMV received a Fraud Prevention and Detection Award from the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA).

In May 2019, DMV received concerns from an unusual number of customers in a short period of time regarding customers receiving duplicate driver licenses they had not requested. DMV's Fraud Unit worked with WisDOT's technology bureau to pull data and look for patterns. A customer also notified the DMV Fraud Unit that someone had been stealing mail from mailboxes in the same area where duplicate cards had been ordered. Similar instances surfaced in Verona, Belleville, Oregon and Edgerton.

"Our top priority is keeping the identities of Wisconsinites safe," WisDOT Secretary-designee Craig Thompson said. "Protecting the integrity of our state-issued identity products is a vital part of that goal. WisDOT relies on its partnership with the Departments of Justice and Administration – and on the awareness and vigilance of consumers – to help ensure that Wisconsin identifications are secure."

When DMV determined that a possible identity theft ring was operating and using Wisconsin DMV products, DMV noted the identity theft on the victims' records and immediately contacted law enforcement and the customers involved. DMV's Fraud

Unit concluded that criminals had obtained confidential information from other sources and used this data to order credit cards and replacement licenses.

With DMV Fraud Unit's findings, the Department of Justice took over the case and is working across state lines to uncover identity fraud linked to Wisconsin's cases.

"Using this case as a learning opportunity for further improvements, DMV systems have been enhanced with additional scanning and protections so that potential fraud can be identified before driver license and identification cards are mailed," DMV Administrator Kristina Boardman said. "An important step that Wisconsin consumers can take to protect their DMV data is to enroll in eNotify. This system provides email and text reminders, and will alert customers about any activity on their DMV account. It is because of this system, and hearing from customers, that DMV was able to act so quickly in stopping the fraudulent efforts of this case."

AAMVA's awards program fosters a tradition of excellence in the motor vehicle and law enforcement community by honoring individuals, teams, and organizations who have committed their time and resources to safety initiatives, outstanding customer service, and public affairs and consumer educational programs throughout North America.