



# Government And Criminals Have And Use Cell Phone Tracking Systems

Any time your cell phone is on, it can be “spoofed” into connecting to a fake cell tower. This can track your location and give access to your phone’s data and voice calls. That the government uses these devices against its citizens is bad enough, but now the technology has fallen into the hands of ‘rogue’ criminal elements. □ TN Editor

The technology can be as small as a suitcase, placed anywhere at any time, and it’s used to track cell phones and intercept calls.

The News4 I-Team found dozens of potential spy devices while driving around Washington, D.C., Maryland and Northern Virginia.

“While you might not be a target yourself, you may live next to someone who is. You could still get caught up,” said Aaron Turner, a leading mobile security expert.

The device, sometimes referred to by the brand name StingRay, is designed to mimic a cell tower and can trick your phone into connecting to it instead.

The News4 I-Team asked Turner to ride around the capital region with special software loaded onto three cell phones, with three different carriers, to detect the devices operating in various locations.

“So when you see these red bars, those are very high-suspicion events,” said Turner.

If you live in or near the District, your phone has probably been tracked at some point, he said.

A recent report by the Department of Homeland Security called the spy devices a real and growing risk.

And the I-Team found them in high-profile areas like outside the Trump International Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue and while driving across the 14th Street bridge into Crystal City. The I-Team got picked up twice while driving along K Street — the corridor popular with lobbyists.

“It looks like they don’t consider us to be interesting, so they’ve dropped us,” Turner remarked looking down at one of his phones.

Every cellphone has a unique identifying number. The phone catcher technology can harness thousands of them at a time.

DHS has warned rogue devices could prevent connected phones from making 911 calls, saying, “If this type of attack occurs during an emergency, it could prevent victims from receiving assistance.”

“Absolutely. That’s a worry,” said D.C. Councilwoman Mary Cheh, adding that the spy technology should be a concern for all who live and work in the District.

The I-Team’s test phones detected 40 potential locations where the spy devices could be operating, while driving around for just a few hours.

Read full story here...