

Gas drive-offs drastically reduced with new invention

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SAGINAW (WJRT) -

(12/19/11) - Could your driver's license be the key to stopping drive-offs at gas stations? One business owner thinks so, and he's already trying out the idea.

It's called Post-Pay. The idea behind the new technology is to make it easier to pay with cash at gas stations, while at the same time making it easier for police to catch people who pump and run without paying.

The first station to install the brand new technology is the Marathon gas station located in the 1800 block of N. Michigan Ave. in Saginaw.

"Innovative. I like it," said Dale Bradburn, a Birch Run man who was just learning about Post-Pay.

Now driver's have three options to pay and pump. They can pre-pay the cashier inside, pay at the pump with a credit or debit card, or try out Post-Pay by swiping their driver's license at the pump.

"Your information is not kept whatsoever. The cashier does not see it. Unless if you drive-off," explained Bob Hohn, president of Paxson Oil Company. Hohn also invented Post-Pay. A Connecticut company manufactures it for him.

Hohn says the driver's license information is temporarily stored in a device inside the store. Drivers can then pump their gas before paying.

Hohn said he came up with his invention because he was fed up with costly drive-offs. "Probably three or four a week which would total a couple hundred dollars. And a lot of our competitors, it's the same rates."

Chad Barlow with EarthFirst Recycling fills up quite often, and says he'll try it out next time. "Sometimes I fill up the tank and I paid too much. I have to go back in the store. This way I can, you know, pump as much as I need and then go pay for it."

Bradburn thinks it's a good idea for the honest people out there. "I think it's OK if you're a law abiding citizen, you got nothing to worry about, you know. And your

credit card, it's not your credit card, it's your driver's license, right? You got nothing to worry about if you're not doing nothing wrong."

If you do something wrong and drive-off, the gas station and police have your name and address.

In the two months it's been on the pumps at the N. Michigan location, employees have only had one pump and run according to Hohn. Down from the three to four a week employees were used to. "A fella three weeks ago, tested the concept. And sure enough police showed up at his door and he had to come in and pay for it." Hohn reports he also faces prosecution.

Hohn says he has a patent pending for the Post-Pay system.

So far only the station in Saginaw, and another one Paxson Oil owns in Bay City has the technology.