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Area

ATM takes a licking, but would-be thief leaves empty-handed

Friday, May 23, 2008 9:13 AM



No Original Caption

By Frank DeLoache

Salisbury Post

KANNAPOLIS — He didn't get any cash, but a 20-year-old Charlotte man inflicted \$85,000 to \$100,000 damage trying to get money out of an automatic teller machine, according to a police report and the company that owns the machine.

Antwon Raquill Dean only had a hammer and pry bar when Kannapolis police officers arrested him

Wednesday morning.

"Judging from the damage he inflicted, we're estimating that he was out there for several hours" trying to break in, said Bob West, chief information officer for Truliant Federal Credit Union, which is based in Winston-Salem.

"But he never got within 2 feet of the cash."

Dean, of 8549 Greenware Trace, Charlotte, faces charges of breaking and/or entering, possession of burglary tools, resisting an officer, injury to real property and possession of marijuana.

The stand-alone automatic teller machine and the kiosk that protects it belong to Truliant and are located in a shopping center at 527 Winecoff School Road, on the Kannapolis-Concord line.

Kannapolis police were alerted at 5:28 a.m. Wednesday to an alarm at the shopping center on Winecoff School Road.

When Officer Steven Brown arrived, he found two employees of the Food Lion store in the center standing at the automatic teller machine. They told Brown a man dressed in blue jeans and a black hooded sweat shirt had walked away from the machine toward a road at the rear of the shopping center.

Brown relayed the description to other officers in the area, and one of the officers spotted the suspect a short time later.

When the officer headed toward the man, he ran. After a brief foot race, officers caught the man in a breezeway at Five Oaks Retirement Center. Officers found a hammer and pry bar on the ground nearby, according to Brown's report.

West, the Truliant official, said the kiosk is built around the back and top of the machine to provide security for employees servicing the machine. The kiosk is air conditioned to keep it from overheating in the summer.

The suspect apparently first tried to get into the kiosk through the roof by prying off the tar top.

He also tried to pry the air-conditioning panel off and pounded the back door with a hammer.

That's just the kiosk.

The suspect also pounded on the cash machine itself with a hammer and tried prying the machine open.

"I think he thought if he could widen the place where the cash comes out, that he could get to the cash," West said.

At some point, the suspect triggered a silent alarm that alerted police and then a regular alarm also sounded. West said he understands Food Lion employees heard the second alarm and walked to the kiosk, prompting the suspect to abandon his work.

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Though the machines are tough, the company will probably have to install a new machine, which will cost \$45,000 to \$50,000, West said. Repairing this machine would cost even more.

Replacing the kiosk itself will cost another \$50,000, West said, though Truliant officials are waiting on a cost estimate.

That's the only Truliant teller machine in Kannapolis, although West said Truliant has "shared relationships" with other credit unions, allowing its members to use those teller machines.

The company will replace the machine as quickly as possible.

"It's a good machine for us," West said.

Fortunately, Truliant has all its machines insured, West said.

"You should see the pictures" of the damage, he said.

Contact Frank DeLoache at 704-797-4245 or [fdeLoache@salisburypost.com](mailto:fdeLoache@salisburypost.com).

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