



Philadelphia Gas Stations See Crime Spike — Should Drivers In NJ Worry?

By: Erin Vogt, November 15, 2022

Despite a spike in violent crimes at Philadelphia gas stations within the past year, there does not appear to be a “meaningful” increase in such crimes across New Jersey.

According to NJ Gasoline-Convenience-Automotive Association Chief Administrator Eric Blomgren, while he has “heard reports of the problems in Philadelphia,” his members in this state have not reported such issues.

“Thankfully it does not appear to be spilling over the river so far,” Blomgren said to New Jersey 101.5.

The Philadelphia Inquirer reported that there have been 69 robberies at gunpoint at gas stations this year so far, up from 65 for all of 2021.

Meanwhile, gas stations in Philadelphia also have seen 30 carjackings this year as compared to just seven last year, according to 6ABC Action News.

The same report cites Philadelphia Police Inspector Charles Layton saying that criminals see opportunity in drivers being distracted, checking their phones while filling their gas tanks.

Safety tips

While New Jersey has remained the only state where drivers do not need to exit their vehicles to pump their own gas, it is common for some motorists to leave their vehicles at a pump and go inside an adjoining convenience store.

A safety shortlist shared by the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C. can be followed by drivers, regardless of location:

- Pick stations that are well-lit and have video-surveillance cameras at the pump.
- Make a list of favorite gas stations along your regular travel routes. Stations near police departments and state police barracks are good choices.
- Always remove your keys and lock the car doors while you are pumping gas. If you sense danger and you have a panic button on your car keys, keep your hands on the panic button until help arrives.

- Keep valuables out of sight in your vehicle and lock the doors, even if you are going inside for just a moment.
- Pick your pump with care. It might be worthwhile to wait for the pump nearest to the attendant or building.
- Pay attention to your surroundings.
- Don't be distracted by your cell phone.