

Two 'Blue Light' Incidents in Two Days

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A second incident from last week has been reported involved a female being pulled over by what appears to have been someone impersonating a police officer. In the second incident, ASU Police report that a female student at ASU reported early Friday morning that she was pulled over on campus by a man impersonating a police officer. The woman reported that she was driving on Hill Street around 12:30 a.m. Friday when she was pulled over by a light gold or silver compact car, possibly a Chevrolet Malibu, according to police. The vehicle had no police markings and displayed a blue light on the interior dashboard. In this more recent incident, a white man in his late 30s to early 40s, described as being approximately 5'8" tall, of medium build approached her car after stopping her. She said the man was clean-shaven with a gold stud earring in his left ear, wearing dark blue or black fatigues, a black toboggan and carrying a flashlight—and spoke with what she called a noticeable "country" accent and was not wearing a gun, duty belt or radio, which raised her suspicion that he wasn't a police officer, police said. She reported the crime around 2 a.m. Friday. In an incident Thursday, it was an older man—about 60—who stopped a woman on Deerfield Road in a pickup truck during the day. Law enforcement spread a bulletin on a silver Tahoe with a white male, wearing a yellow windbreaker jacket and a ball cap that used the blue light to stop a woman near Boone Baptist Church on Deerfield shortly after 3pm.

ASU police are advising everyone to use caution if pulled over by an unmarked vehicle displaying only blue lights. All legitimate unmarked police vehicles are equipped with blue lights and siren, and said if there is any concern that someone is truly a police officer because the car is unmarked, they don't use a siren or they are not in uniform, turn on your flashers, call 911 to confirm whether it's actually a police officer, and drive slowly to the nearest police station or well-lit public area before pulling over.

Anyone with information on this crime or any other should call ASU Police Department at (828) 262-2150 or Crimestoppers at (828) 268-6959. Rewards up to \$1,000 are possible for tips that lead to an arrest.

The ASU website offers tips for staying safe:

- All law enforcement officers carry photo identification with their badges and are required to display them if asked. Citizens are encouraged to ask for identification, as anyone can purchase a new or used badge off the Internet.
- Do not be afraid to have the officer hold up his badge and ID so that you can read it. Take the time to read them and look for the agency name and officer's name. (Please note: Officers will not allow you to hold or otherwise take possession of their identification.)
- Do not be afraid to advise the officer that you intend to call dispatch and verify the officer's identity.
- Call 911 if you believe the person is posing as a law enforcement officer.
- Remember, if it doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. Your safety is most important.