

Alaska IDs Easy to Counterfeit, Experts Say

Wednesday, 14 May 2014

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

Yesterday KMXT told you about the new Alaska driver license and photo identification cards that will begin being issued in June. Amy Erickson is the director of the Alaska Division of Motor Vehicles and said the hope is to deter counterfeiters and protect the identities of Alaskans.

“According to the Association of American Motor Vehicle Administrators Alaska’s license is the easiest to counterfeit in the nation because ours is currently very unsophisticated.”

Erickson said the new design includes a number of added security features.

“I can’t give you all of them because we don’t want to let everyone in on it but there is a ghost photograph of your photo which would be on the license – so two photos on the license. There’s a clear window in the shape of the state of Alaska and a fine line pattern that’s much like you’d see on a dollar bill.”

The new ID cards and licenses will also include a laminate with a snowflake hologram and the state seal. Erickson said the new cards were designed by an Alaskan artist and chosen by Governor Sean Parnell.

The new cards won’t be available the same day at local DMV offices. Erickson said a temporary card will be given while a new one is mailed from a centralized, secure facility. She said the temporary cards will be made of soft plastic.

“It seems like you’d be able to tear it but it’s very durable. I’ve tried it and you can’t tear it. It’s much like the voter registration card.”

The process of administering cards from a central facility is growing in popularity around the nation. Erickson said 26 other states use the central issuance process and Arizona will join Alaska in doing so next month.

“It’s really becoming an industry standard.”

She said some folks may be wary of the temporary cards, but overall she thinks the new IDs and licenses will be fantastic and hopefully protect Alaskans from identity theft.

Current cards are valid through their expiration date, so people don't need to rush into the DMV to pick up a new one in June.