



The National Security Agency isn't the only government entity secretly collecting data from people's cellphones. Local police are increasingly scooping it up, too.

Armed with new technologies, including mobile devices that tap into cellphone data in real time, dozens of local and state police agencies are capturing information about thousands of cellphone users at a time, whether they are targets of an investigation or not, according to public records obtained by USA TODAY and Gannett newspapers and TV stations.

The records, from more than 125 police agencies in 33 states, reveal:

About one in four law-enforcement agencies have used a tactic known as a "tower dump," which gives police data about the identity, activity and location of any phone that connects to the targeted cellphone towers over a set span of time, usually an hour or two. A typical dump covers multiple towers, and wireless providers, and can net information from thousands of phones.

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