GPS Jamming Devices Pose Many Threats (w/ Video)

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GPS is a navigation system of more than 30 satellites circling the earth. These satellites transmit signals to receivers on land, sea and air. The GPS receiver uses these signals to triangulate their exact position anywhere on the planet.

(PhysOrg.com) -- The latest GPS jamming devices are now being used by car thieves in the UK to render stolen cars and trucks undetectable by law enforcement. These devices also pose a threat to airlines and US military overseas.

GPS jammers send out a radio signal that's the same frequency as the satellite signal. Since GPS satellite signals are weak, a GPS jamming device that puts out approximately 2 watts is sufficient to disrupt a GPS signal in a vehicle that's approximately within 10 feet of the device. This leaves the in-vehicle system unable to establish its position and report

back to a GPS tracking center, where the vehicle is registered.

There are also fears that terrorists can use these devices to disrupt air traffic and cause severe safety and economic damage to the US. More powerful jammers could disrupt GPS signals in close proximity of airports, causing safety concerns.

Our military overseas use GPS extensively to record their position as well as the position of the enemy. With GPS jamming devices in the hands of our enemy, U.S. and allied forces can be severely impacted when launching ground and air-strikes.

In Germany, it's believed that some drivers are using GPS jamming devices to evade GPS-based road charging; a concept that was introduced for trucks in 2005. In Germany, as well as the UK, it's illegal to sell or use such jammers, however it appears to be legal to import or own them.

Emergency networks, power stations, airports and other things that rely on accurate timing of GPS signals would have very serious consequences if a powerful GPS jamming signal was used on these locations. In the UK a detection system is now in its prototype stages that would be deployed at airports, harbors and other locations that rely on accurate timing of GPS signals.