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Tonawanda and a few from Amherst, have had their accounts breached, according to local police, in what may be the latest round of fraud stemming from a breach at a prominent local fast-food restaurant.

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More than two dozen KeyBank card users, mostly from the New York town of Tonawanda and a few from Amherst, have had their accounts breached, according to local police, in what may be the latest round of fraud stemming from a breach at a prominent local fast-food restaurant.

KeyBank debit cards or credit cards of area residents have been used recently to make unauthorized purchases all over the country, and police are investigating the possibility that, as with similar cases last year, the breach in security may involve Ted's Jumbo Red Hots.

The purchases have involved everything from Visa cards to pool supplies and were made in Florida, North Carolina, California, Montreal and other cities, as well as locally. The purchases were made between Jan. 20 and Sunday.

"I've got 24 reports of people's cards being used all over the country," Tonawanda Police Capt. Peter Klipfel said Monday.

Tonawanda police posted an alert to residents on the department's Facebook page and encouraged all KeyBank customers to check their accounts to make sure they weren't victimized.

Amherst police said they received three or four similar reports, all involving KeyBank cards, during the last week. Cheektowaga had one report of someone using a KeyBank credit card to make two purchases totaling \$688 at a Tops store in Buffalo. The victim was still in possession of the credit card that was charged.

Some police investigators suspect a problem on KeyBank's end, but corporate

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There were rampant reports of such a breach late last year that also affected customers of other banks, including Buffalo-based First Niagara Bank and Angola-based Evans Bank. In both cases, that chain may have been Ted's Jumbo Red Hots, the region's best-known hot-dog retailer.

A Ted's spokesman acknowledged Monday that the company was hit last year by a security breach that was identified by First Data Corp., its national credit card and debit card transaction processor.

First Data notified Ted's on a Friday in late September and directed the chain to take several specific steps to "make sure that our systems were fully secure," said the spokesman, who did not want to be identified because he also does work for other companies.

"We didn't discover specific problems, but we definitely tightened up our security," he said. The spokesman said the processing company thought that the data theft was the result of computer hacking and not an "inside job" by a Ted's employee.

More recently, the Ted's spokesman said the company received calls within the last week from First Data and the U.S. Secret Service, which investigates financial crimes. The Secret Service was inquiring about credit card fraud in any of the company's restaurants, while First Data told Ted's that authorities had someone in custody in connection with the thefts.

Meanwhile, Myers said, KeyBank has "elevated our monitoring on all potentially affected debit and credit cards in the area." She also said the cases involve "compromised cards" and not identity theft, because it doesn't appear that personal ID such as Social Security numbers or dates of birth were involved.

Any Key client who may have been affected would be contacted by Key officials by phone, Myers said.

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