



# NYPD Routinely Tracked Citizen's Cellphones Without Warrants Since 2008

TN Note: There is no justification for anyone using Stingray technology to secretly track a citizen's cell phone, except that a search warrant is in hand. However, all other citizens in close proximity are also caught in the dragnet, making it a privacy advocate's nightmare. Technocrats see no problem in skirting the law when it suits their purposes.

New York City police have tracked citizens' cellphones over 1,000 times since 2008 without using warrants, according to public records obtained by the [New York](#) Civil Liberties Union.

The organization announced on Thursday that the [NYPD](#) has typically used "stingrays" after obtaining lower-level court orders, but not warrants, before using the devices. The department also does not have a policy guiding how police can use the controversial devices. This is the first time that the scope of stingray use by the nation's largest police agency has been confirmed.

The devices, generically known as stingrays, work by mimicking cell

towers and tracking a cellphone's location at a specific time. Law enforcement agencies can use the technology to track people's movements through their cellphone use. Stingrays can also detect the phone numbers that a person has been communicating with, according to the NYCLU. The devices allow law enforcement to bypass cellphone carriers, who have provided information to police in the past, and can track data about bystanders in close proximity to the intended target.

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