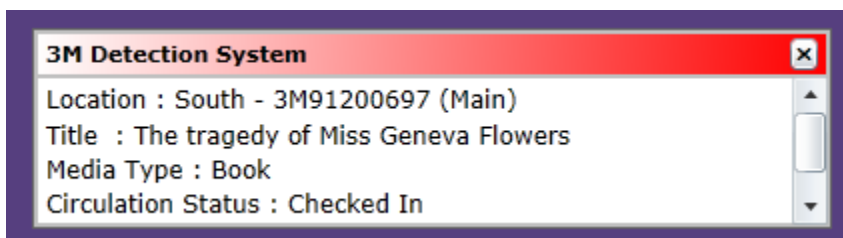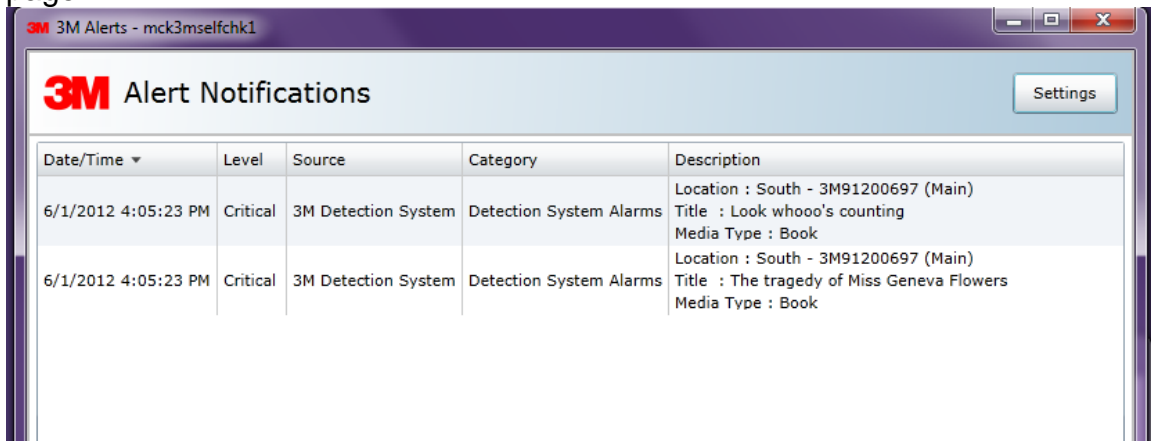# Tech Services Board Report
June 2012

The past month has been a busy time at the library. We spent the month of May converting our Checkpoint RFID equipment to 3M RFID equipment. The library's RFID equipment serves as a security system for the library. When patrons accidentally walk through the security gates with an item that has not been checked out, the item will cause the gates to alarm. Once the gates alarm, a message will pop up on the circulation computers telling staff what item sounded the alarm and which gate alarmed. Below is a picture of what staff see when the gates alarm:

This is a picture of the pop-up.

If staff misses the pop-up, they can see the item on the 3M Detection System page.

The other important aspect RFID brings to the library is our ability to have easy check-in and check-out of materials. The RFID tag which is placed on the inside of most books, DVD cases, and audio CDs is read over a thin pad that tells Polaris, our integrated library system, that the item is either being returned or checked out. When an item is checked out the tag is deactivated and will allow patrons to leave the building without the alarm sounding. When the item is returned, the tag is reactivated upon check-in.

The library originally installed RFID in 2006 using Checkpoint security. By 2008, Checkpoint was out of the library business and 3M had partnered with Checkpoint to maintain the equipment. Over the past couple of years, our equipment has needed more maintenance and did not offer some of the latest technology we were looking for in a system. With this in mind, we decided to pursue new RFID options for the library.

We started investigating potential RFID vendors in January when the American Library Association Midwinter Conference was held in Dallas. This allowed the library director, an IT director, and me to go downtown to meet with RFID vendors and view the equipment. After meeting with three vendors, we were in agreement that 3M would serve the library's needs the best. The highlight of converting to 3M was that we would not have to reprogram all of the RFID tags currently in use. The tags would be reprogrammed for use with 3M equipment as items were checked-in or out. Other vendors we talked with had the library pulling all items off the shelf and individually scanning each tag in order to reprogram the tags to work with their equipment.

As you walk through either library, you will also notice we also have new express check machines. The new machines are easier for patrons to use and offer patrons the option of whether or not they would like to print a receipt. Patrons can also renew items and view account information on the express check machines. If you haven't done so already, please take the time to try one.

Janet Cox
System Coordinator