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Abstract New York authorities arrest 9 students after telephone company investigation finds that they have been making thousands of dollars worth of free calls using blue boxes.

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Youths, Long Distance Call Apparatus Seized

MINEOLA, N.Y. (AP)—After weeks of tracing thousands of dollars worth of long-distance telephone calls, New York authorities have arrested nine college students said to have used a "little blue box" to make free calls.

Eight of the arrested youths are students at Clarkson College of Technology, and the State University College, both in upstate Potsdam; the ninth is a Great Neck student at the New York Institute of Technology.

The youths used a small blue box equipped with buttons, switches and a

maze of wires to make the free calls, authorities said.

The caller dialed the information operator of the area code he wished to call and, when the operator answered, he flipped a switch. The mechanism kept the call hooked to the area code, but disconnected the operator, thereby permitting calls to be made without being recorded or charged to the caller's phone, officials said.

The telephone company discovered the scheme when records of information calls which normally last no longer than three minutes revealed calls lasting up to 100 minutes.