

Here's a New Tool Scammers Use to Steal Your Money: The Coronavirus

Below are scams that are circulating right now:

In March, right after we were instructed to isolate ourselves, scammers started to send what looked like official letters from the SSA (Social Security Administration) stating that benefits would be suspended unless the recipient called a phone number. When the person called the phone number, s/he was told to send a gift card or wire transfer to guarantee the continuation of social security benefits. Needless to say, the SSA would never do this.

Emails were sent to offer critical medical supplies such as masks and gloves. In order to buy these items, the seller requested a credit card number. Obviously, you guessed it: the merchandise never arrived and the scammer had a shopping spree!

In this fraud, the scammer, acting as a public health official, offered to put the person's name on a list so that s/he would be one of the first people to get a vaccination whenever the vaccinations became available. Needless to say, once the scammer got the credit card number to reserve a place in line, the scammer started a spending spree with your money!

In San Diego, the FBI reported on a new scheme using texts or emails for promises of stimulus checks or freebies from Costco. These social media platform provided links to malware, ransom-ware, or other fraudulent methods to get at your personal information. Costco is not texting or using their social platforms for these purposes. Do not click on unsolicited links and do not give out personal information. If you qualified for a stimulus check from the government, the government would not ask you to pay a fee to get your check.

This fraud involves emails or text messages asking for money to donate to a research team on the verge of a drug and/or vaccine for COVID-19. Unfortunately, any monies donated will be funds the scammer receives.

Scammers send alerts that appear to be from the CDC (Center for Disease Control) or the WHO (World Health Organization). While some of these alerts provide useful information, much of it is misinformation and may even infect the computer. Again, you do your own research on the original links and don't open the email links.