



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

A STATE ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

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Media Release

From: Corporal Wendy McGinnis
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Re: New Text Messaging Phishing Scam

Date: September 13, 2011

The Hernando County Sheriff's Office has received several complaints of attempted texting and/or phone scams that Hernando County citizens have encountered on both home and cell phones. This scam is NOT limited to customers at one particular bank; however, Suncoast Schools Federal Credit Union has recently received numerous complaints and posted the following awareness message on their Facebook:

Member Awareness - New Text Messaging Phishing Scam

Suncoast would like to bring to your attention a drastic increase in social engineering text phishing attempts. **These messages were NOT sent by Suncoast.** Nor were they sent as a result of a release of our member's information. These messages are being received by thousands of consumers, who all have accounts with different financial institutions. At this time, it is undetermined how the fraudsters obtained the list of cell phone numbers they are targeting.

Here's how it works:

1. The fraudsters have obtained a list or group of cell phone numbers (target victims).
2. Text messages are sent to a victims implying there is a problem with their debit/credit/ATM card.
3. Example: Please call us immediately at 866-515-0597. Verification needed on your debit/ATM card. Thank You.

Do Not respond if you receive a text message. If you received a message and have already responded, a block must be placed on the card number for which information you provided. If you provided your checking account number, that account suffix should be closed and a new suffix opened.

If you or someone in your family has received a fraudulent text message and provided information, contact Suncoast at (800) 999-5887 immediately so that we can monitor your account.

“It is strictly a ‘phishing’ attempt to obtain individuals personal identification information” said Sgt. Jeff Kraft. “If someone has already given out any personal information, they should file a fraud alert with the three major credit reporting bureaus. If they had actual fraud charges or fraud accounts open in their name, then they need to file a police report.”

The Hernando County Sheriff’s Office reminds citizens to never provide personal information if they have not confirmed the identity of the recipient.