

Oregon DOJ warns of economic stimulus scams

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

SALEM, Ore. -- Scammers are already using President Obama's economic stimulus package to try and rip off consumers, the Oregon Department of Justice (ODOJ) reported today.

Email messages sent to potential victims ask for bank information, claiming they will directly deposit stimulus money. Instead, scammers drain the consumer's bank account and vanish.

The emails sometimes appear to be from legitimate government agencies and ask consumers to "verify" that they are eligible for payment. By clicking on links, consumers download malicious software that can be used by identity thieves.

Some web sites suggest that for as little as \$1.99 consumers can get a list of economic stimulus grants to apply for. This allows the scammer to get the consumer's credit card number or lock them into an illegal "negative option" agreement that can charge hundreds of thousands of dollars if the consumer doesn't cancel.

ODOJ says to also beware of offers that charge consumers for a seminar that will show them how to apply for federal stimulus grants and get rich quick with the money they receive.

Oregon consumers who believe they been scammed or have questions about stimulus-related offers or scams should call the Attorney General's consumer hotline at 1-877-877-9392. Written complaints can be sent to Financial Fraud/Consumer Protection Section, 1162 Court St. NE, Salem, OR 97301-4096.

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