EUGENE POLICE NEWS RELEASE

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For further information, contact:
Melinda McLaughlin, APR, Public Information Director, at 541.682.5124
John Hankemeier, Public Information Coordinator, 541.682.5197
After Hours Media Line: 541.682.5155

Elaborate Nation-wide Wire Transfer Scams

In recent weeks, Eugene Police have received information about elaborate scams that are costing hundreds of millions in dollars to people nationwide.

In one of these recent scams, EPD learned of a person who lost tens of thousands of dollars from their home equity line of credit. The credit union discovered that the account holder’s phone number had been changed last December. In March, someone had faxed in a wire transfer request with all the valid information for the victim, including; the name, date of birth, SSN, address, account numbers, and the updated phone number. The wire transfer fax that was received also had what appeared to be a valid signature from the victim. The money was then transferred to an out of state bank account, and from there, likely to a foreign region overseas. The receiving account presumably belonged to a person unaware of the scam or naïve to their role as a partner in the scam to move the money.

In another scam, a credit union received a call from a customer requesting information about a wire transfer. The caller ID displayed a number that was valid in the account holder’s records and the customer had just made a recent visit to the main branch and was personally known to the staff. The caller however, had a distinct foreign accent and when the credit union called the number listed for the account holder, the same person with the accent answered. In this case, it is possible that the victim had used a call-forwarding service that had been compromised, and the account holder was unaware at the time.

It is important to understand how far thieves will go to steal your money so that you can protect yourself against their actions. To protect against this type of activity, view your financial accounts regularly and report any suspicious transactions to their financial institution immediately.

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