

Gambling

One area with a high potential for fraud is Internet gambling. There are hundreds of gambling sites on the Internet where you can bet on sports, play Poker or other casino games. Gambling on the Internet is very risky because this is an unregulated industry and currently there is no way to control it. Often companies are based in foreign countries using foreign bank accounts that can easily bilk players out of money. Many times players are unable to contact these companies and collect their winnings.

The "Hijack"

The Hijack is a new form of fraud unique to the Internet. Consumers are prompted to download a "viewer program" to see computer images free. Once the program is downloaded, the consumer's computer is "hijacked" by the viewer program that turns off the modem speakers, disconnects the computer from the local Internet provider, dials an international number and connects the consumer to a remote site. The expensive international costs are charged to the consumer's phone bill until the phone is turned off.

Online Auctions

The vast majority of online auctions are completed without any problem, but there is a growing problem with sellers failing to deliver items that have paid for.

Pump and Dump

This is a stock scam. Messages are posted on the Internet urging readers to buy stock that is poised for rapid growth. The writer often claim to have insider information about a pending development. In reality, the writer stands to gain by selling or buying stock shares after the price goes up or down. This ploy is normally used with little known, thinly traded stocks.

Risk Free Scam

Many times this scam solicits its victims with exotic sounding investments such as wireless cable projects, prime bank securities or fictitious business ventures overseas. Promoters misrepresent risk to "investors" by comparing their offer to something safe, such as bank security deposits. Many times the investment never really exists.

If you feel you have been a victim of Internet fraud, go to www.IFCCFBI.com for additional information and to file a complaint. The complaint will be forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

You may contact the Elk Grove Police Department by calling 916-478-8000. You may also obtain additional information about other crime prevention topics on the Elk Grove Police Department website:

www.elkgrovepd.com

If you have information about any crime, missing person or criminal investigation, please call our TIP LINE at :

916-691-0411

Elk Grove Police Department
8380 Laguna Palms Way
Suite 100
Elk Grove, CA 95758

Administration: 916-478-8000
Fax: 916-691-0415

Dispatch: 916-714-5115
Emergency: 9-1-1



Internet Crime Prevention

www.elkgrovepd.com



The Internet is an amazing and exciting tool if used correctly.

But in the hands of unscrupulous people, it can be downright dangerous. Here are some basic tips to protect your computer, your data and your identity:

- Put a firewall on your computer. These programs block unwanted applications from accessing your machine
- If you are “wireless”, make sure you have activated the Wired Equivalent Privacy (WEP) on your system so others can’t enter your system through your connection to the outside world.
- Clean your machine of “spyware”. Bad things can hitch a ride in with the “good” pages you surf. By using spyware removal software on a regular basis, your computer will run better, not have those annoying ‘pop ups’ and your personal information is protected
- Don’t use your credit card to purchase items from websites you do not know. Shop sites with name recognition or are highly recommended. Make sure the companies encrypt their data to protect your information from being hijacked.
- Use junk or “spam” mail blockers. Do not open email from sites or people you do not know. Invasive programs can be sent through email allowing others to take over your computer.
- If you share your computer with others, have separate log ins and password protect them
- When making up passwords, use combinations of letters and numbers, not easy things like your pet’s name or your birth date.
- Set your screensaver to activate after only a few minutes and password it. This is important if you have confidential information on your screen and you must leave your computer unattended.



Children and the Internet

Protecting our children from online predators requires parents to

monitor the child’s usage, to whom are they chatting, what programs are they using and what information are they giving out?

- Choose online services with blocking software.
- Teach kids not to give out personal information like their name, address or phone number.
- Explain that sometimes people are not who or what they claim to be.
- Never allow kids to make face-to-face meetings with another user unless you approve.
- Do not let your child call anyone they meet on line without your permission.
- Know your children’s friends and their parents.
- Check the internet history for pages your children surfed.
- Remind children that no one should be asking them for their passwords and they should never give them out.
- Teach your children not to respond to threatening, suggestive or obscene messages and to let you know if they receive any.
- Forward copies of threatening or suggestive email to your service provider and ask for their help.
- If you become aware of the transmission, use or viewing of child pornography while online, report it to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at www.missingkids.com
- “Shoulder surf” if you must to ensure your child’s safety!

Fraud

Fraud may take many forms. From the ‘get rich quick’ scheme to “free offers” that never are free, paying attention to the golden rule of life:

“If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is”.

Teaser Pages

These are those pop ups or banner ads that say, “you’ve won” or “lose weight for free” or “travel to the Bahamas for \$50.00.” You say to yourself, “Wow, that’s a heck of a deal. How can they do it so cheap?” The truth is, they can’t. Internet scam artists get you to give them either personal information, credit card data or your email address and use that information to defraud others.

High Pressure Sales

A high pressure sales pitch may sound exciting, but resist! Before you invest any money get a second opinion from your attorney, accountant or financial planner. At the least, research the company’s history and reputation. Many companies that appear to offer fabulous deals are just new shell corporations set up in foreign countries.

