

Computer Tech Scam Circulating

July 13, 2018



**Sweetwater
Scam
Alert**

Sweetwater County Sheriff Mike Lowell today issued a warning to the community concerning a telephone / computer scam making the rounds.

The ruse is commonly called the “Computer Repair Scam,” “Tech Scam,” or “Tech Support Scam.” Scammers cold-call people, especially seniors, and tell them their computer has become infected with a virus, compromised with malware, or is otherwise experiencing problems.

Lowell said the scammers often falsely identify themselves as representatives of legitimate, well-known companies such as Microsoft or anti-virus software manufacturers like Norton or McAfee in an effort to sound legitimate. They may even know the prospective victim’s name and address.

“These companies don’t telephone people when there are problems or issues,” he said. “It’s all just part of the swindlers’ strategy to make things sound more convincing.”

In addition to providing sensitive personal identification and financial information to scammers, victims are charged anywhere from \$250 to \$500 or more in bogus “repair fees.” Officials say people have been conned out of tens of millions of dollars over the years.

Lowell offered the following tips for people to protect themselves from the “Computer Repair Scam:”

Remember that computer and software companies aren’t going to call to tell you about problems that you are having, and don’t be deceived if the caller knows your name and address: such information is readily available from a wide variety of sources, including ordinary telephone books.

Never follow any instructions received during an unsolicited call, such as instructions to click on links or download attachments. Never provide user names or passwords, or agree to subscribe to any “security systems” stemming from unsolicited calls.

“If you get an unsolicited call like this, just hang up, even if the caller knows your name and address,” Lowell said. “And we also ask that people warn friends and family members who are seniors, as they are so often targeted.”