

Consumer **WARNING**

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CON ARTISTS GO "PHISHING" FOR YOUR FINANCIAL INFORMATION

An increasing number of Illinoisans are finding themselves on the receiving end of an Internet scam called "phishing." In this scam, con artists pose as your financial institution or credit card provider and send spam or pop-up messages designed to trick you into revealing your account information, credit card numbers, or other information that could be used to steal your identity.

The e-mails and pop-up messages often look authentic, and they usually direct you to Web sites that look just like the sites of the legitimate businesses. Once you get to the site, you are asked for sensitive account information to "update" or "validate" your account information for some urgent reason.

The most important thing to remember is that legitimate companies will not contact you and ask you to send them personal or financial information via e-mail. If you receive an e-mail or pop-up message asking for sensitive information, do *not* reply to the message and do *not* click on any links inside it. If you are concerned about your account, you should contact your bank or credit card provider using a phone number or Web site that you know is legitimate. If in doubt, look at your most recent bank statement or credit card bill, which will most likely include the business's customer service number and Web site address.



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