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A Message from Computer Solutions Plus: When Scammers Pretend to Be the Good Guys

Over the past little while, we've had several clients come to us with concerns about suspicious emails, online investments, and individuals claiming to represent financial institutions or fraud investigation departments.

Two recent situations have prompted us to share this warning.

In one case, someone was receiving correspondence from three questionable investment companies, along with an individual claiming to be a fraud investigator who could help recover money.

In another, someone was preparing to send personal identification to an email address supposedly belonging to a major Canadian bank's fraud department. Fortunately, we had an opportunity to question the legitimacy of that request before the information was sent.

Here's what everyone needs to understand: Sometimes the scam doesn't end when you discover you've been scammed.

Fraudsters know that someone who has lost money may be desperate to recover it. They take advantage of that situation by posing as investigators, financial recovery specialists, bank representatives, or even law enforcement officials.

They may claim they've located your missing funds, frozen a suspicious account, or need to verify your identity before they can help.

And that's where another scam begins.

A few warning signs worth remembering:

- **Promises to recover lost investments.** Be extremely cautious of anyone who contacts you unexpectedly offering to recover money lost through cryptocurrency, online trading, or investment fraud.
- **Requests for identification.** Never send photographs of your driver's licence, passport, banking documents, or other personal identification to an unverified email address.
- **Fees to release your money.** Claims that you must pay taxes, processing fees, or deposits before recovered funds can be released are major warning signs.



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- **Urgent demands.** Scammers frequently pressure people to act immediately, hoping they'll respond before questioning the situation.

- **Official-looking emails and phone numbers.** A familiar company logo, convincing email address, or recognizable caller ID does not guarantee you're communicating with the real organization.

Our advice is simple: Stop. Verify. Then proceed.

If someone contacts you claiming to represent your bank, hang up or stop responding. Contact the institution yourself using the telephone number printed on your bank card or listed on its official website.

Do not use the telephone number, email address, or website link supplied in the suspicious message.

And remember, there's nothing wrong with asking someone you trust for a second opinion before responding.

At Computer Solutions Plus, we've been helping customers navigate computer and technology concerns for many years. Increasingly, that also means helping people recognize situations where technology is being used to deceive them.

We're sharing this because these situations are happening to real people, including people right here in our community.

Please take a moment to discuss these scams with family members, friends, and neighbours. A few minutes of conversation could prevent a very expensive mistake.

Stay informed. Stay cautious. And when something doesn't feel right, ask questions before you act.

Computer Solutions Plus

Helping our community with technology since 1997.