



Attorney General Doug Peterson

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 18, 2016

Contact: Suzanne Gage
402.471.2656
Suzanne.gage@nebraska.gov

Attorney General and State Patrol Warn of Spear Phishing Scam Targeting City and County Officials and Small Businesses in Nebraska

Over the last several days, city and county finance directors and small businesses across the state have been the subject of a targeted “spear phishing” attack. Spear phishers target select groups of people by masquerading as a trustworthy source through email or other forms of communication. The attacks have primarily targeted individuals from government and businesses that have control over finances.

The victim of the scam will receive an email that appears as if it is legitimately coming from his or her supervisor. The email requests the victim to wire or transfer funds from the entity’s financial account, and sometimes, the scammer expresses great urgency to rush the victim to action. The spoofed email address in the “From” line will be created with a forged sender address. Email spoofing is a technique that allows the scammer to imitate or trick the email recipient into thinking he or she is communicating with a trusted and regular contact within the organization.

The following tips are ways to help ensure that you or your organization do not fall victim to this type of fraudulent activity:

- Encourage the questioning of practices that are outside of the normal way of doing business.
- Take the time to pick up the phone or speak in person with the individual requesting the money transfer.
- Increase your everyday awareness of current trends in fraudulent activity.
- Encourage information security training and develop best practices for employees.
- Consult with your IT department or service provider to ensure you have preventative measures in place to combat these techniques.

If you have fallen victim to these attacks, please contact your local police or sheriff's office or report it to the Nebraska State Patrol through the Nebraska Information and Analysis Center at <http://niac.nebraska.gov/>. If you are not a victim, but would like to file a scam report or receive general information about frauds and scams, please visit the Consumer Protection Division of the Nebraska Attorney General's Office at <https://protectthegoodlife.nebraska.gov/>.