



HALL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

CRIME PREVENTION UNIT



CRIME PREVENTION TIP

DATE: November 20, 2009

SUBJECT: Internet Scam: Fake Verizon "Balance Checker"

The below alert was sent out by the Baltimore, Maryland Police Department Criminal Intelligence Section on 11-17-09.

Cyber-criminals have started preying on Verizon Wireless customers, sending out spam e-mail messages that say their accounts are over the limit and offering them a "balance checker" program to review their payments.

The balance checker is actually a malicious Trojan horse program. Victims who download the software open up a back door to their computer, where more malware can be downloaded from the Zbot botnet, which is known for stealthily lifting online banking credentials and emptying accounts. Recently, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation said this type of financial fraud has removed \$100 million from U.S. bank accounts.

As always, exercise extreme caution when conducting financial matters via email or online. If there is any doubt whatsoever about the veracity of the transaction or procedure, find a valid phone number for that company from another source (such as the back of your credit card statement or by doing an independent phone # search- don't use the one provided in the email), then call the company to verify the legitimacy.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact

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