



NEWS RELEASE

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Attorney General Jackley Warns of Email Scam Targeting Businesses

PIERRE, S.D. – Attorney General Marty Jackley is warning of a scam that has evolved and resurfaced targeting businesses. Previously this scam involved a phone call asking for the billing department with hopes that the person answering the phone would authorize the paying of a fictitious invoice. The newer hi-tech version begins when the scam artists do their research via business websites to identify names, email addresses and business specific information so ward off suspicion, a phone call may also be used to identify who they need to submit the bill to. The scam begins with an email to those in charge of paying invoices. The email is from purported individuals within their companies authorizing payment and being told to wire money for an outstanding bill. The spoofed email is fictitious and the bill is not from a legitimate business.

“The Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division has several complaints from South Dakota businesses that have paid false invoices, some with substantial losses. Consumers and businesses alike need to proceed with caution when answering emails and put in place protections in authorizing payment of invoices. It is no longer safe to assume that the sender is always who you think it is,” said Jackley.

Few tips to avoid becoming a victim:

- Read everything before you sign or pay a balance due
- Ask questions when instructed to wire or to imitate an automatic transfers of funds
- Even if the email looks official or coming from a known contact, follow-up to verify via phone

If you believe you have been a victim of this scam, contact the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division at 800-300-1986 and consumerhelp@state.sd.us.